

A
Catechetical Course
OF
SERMONS
For the whole YEAR.
Being, an
EXPLANATION
OF THE
Church-Catechism.
IN

Fifty two distinct Discourses on so many several *Texts of Scripture*. Wherein are briefly contain'd, The most necessary Points of *Christian Doctrine*.

Recommended Especially for the use of Families.

In Two Volumes.

By *PETER NEWCOME*, M. A. Vicar
of *Aldenham in Hertfordshire*.

The Second Edition Reviewed.

L O N D O N:

Printed by *J. R.* for *John Wyat*, at the *Rose* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, M D C C I I.

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1-2-1

~~This Address, that offers not only to account
in part for my Labour, but also to~~

~~report my Care in your Government,
but to Testify my Obedience to your Lord-~~

~~ship, Right Reverend Father in God,~~

~~published in order to your Edification,
in the Dedication of this~~

~~Knowledge, and the Reformation of
Mans Manners.~~

~~I beg your Lordships Blessing, and your
Prayers for me, and for the Well-~~

~~being, however otherwise Diligent Endeavours
I make for this Great End; which I shall~~

~~My Lord,~~

THAT I might express the Just
Veneration I have for your Lord-
ships known Worth, as well as
the Sense of my own Bounden Duty to
my Diocesan; In all Humility I presume
to Publish this Catechetical Course of
Sermons under the Patronage of your
Lordships Name.

And I hope, my Lord, I need not Doubt
of your Lordships favourable Acceptance of
this

The Dedication.

this Address, that offers not only to account in part how my Labours have been laid out upon my Cure, under your Government, but to Testify my Obedience to your Lordships excellent Advice to your Clergy, published, in order to your Primary Visitation; Designing hereby the Interest of Religion in the Promotion of Divine Knowledge, and the Reformation of Mens Manners.

I beg your Lordships Blessing, and your Prayers upon these and all other my Well-meant, however otherwise Deficient Endeavours for this Great End; wherein I shall ever make it my Care to approve my self,

My Lord,

Your Lordships

most Dutiful Son

and Servant,

PETER NEWCOME.

THE

The Epistle to the Reader.

Constant Instruction in the Doctrine of the
Church of England: And that there is no for-
mality better collected in the short Cate-
chism of the Church than prescribed.

THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER:

And particularly to such as inhabit the
Parish of ALDENHAM.

AS it is my indispensable Duty to
serve the Cure of Souls, after the
best manner I am able, as long as
I Live; so it hath been a long
time, my *Desire* and *Design* to perpetuate,
(what I could) such my Service, by some
Testimony of My Sincerity herein, to remain
(more especially with those of my own par-
ticular Cure) even after my *Death*.

For which end, with respect to the best
Judgments and greatest *Necessaries* of Men, I
obliged my self to this present Undertak-
ing; as being well assured that there is no
thing both more *Profitable* and *Needful* than
A 3

The Epistle to the Reader.

Constant Instruction in the *Principles of Practical Religion*; And that these are in no *Formulary* better collected than in the short *Catechism* our Church hath prescribed.

In this *Exposition* whereof, I desire not to be thought so assuming as to pretend to advance any new *Hypothesis* for the Information of the Learned; having been Cautious to publish nothing but what hath already been approved by Good Authority, for the Instruction of the Ignorant. My aim is to represent the *Fundamentals* of our Religion the same, by my *Explication*, that they have always been represented to be by other, the most Judicious, *Expositors*; whom therefore I have made my Teachers; being in no wise Ambitious, to say *New things*, but only careful to represent, in a more useful Way, *Old Truths*; That what hath, hitherto, been the Entertainment, in a manner, only of the Learned, might be contrived for the benefit of the Vulgar; and a *System of Practical Divinity*, be fitted not for the Ornament of a Students Library, so much as for the Assistance of *Family Devotion*.

To this end; It is humbly proposed that all *Householders* out of Conscience of their Duty and Zeal to do Good as such, would be pleased to oblige themselves to read, or cause to be read in order, one of these Discourses at a time, in their Families, Being

The Epistle to the Reader.

solemnly Assembled to Worship God together in the Evening, (when there is convenient Vacancy) of every Lords Day in the Year; for which a distinct Discourse is here provided. And this, not for one Course only, but it ought constantly to be continued in the like manner Every Year: Which, in some respect, would answer what is noted in the Life of that Great and Good Prelate, Bishop *Saunderson*, to have been his Opinion and Desire, viz. *That the way to restore this Nation to a more Meek and Christian Temper, is to have the Body of Divinity (or so much of it as was needful to be known by the Common People) to be put into LIT. Homilies, or Sermons, and these to be read every Sunday of the Year, as infallibly as the Blood circulates the Body at a set time; and then as certainly begun again, and continued the Year following.*

To render this, yet, further useful, I am designing also an *Abridgement* wherein shall be resolved every of these Distinct Discourses by it self, into *Questions*, whereunto the *Answer* shall be only *Yes* or *No*; whereby the Young, and the most Ignorant of the Family may be wholesomely Examined, and further Instructed in the Matter just read to them; and engaged to Attention, and helped to the Remembrance of what they must be sure to account for.

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I am not more satisfied of the usefulness of the *Design*, than sensible of the great Defects of this *Performance* in the following Discourses. But they that know me will accept an *Apology* both from the meanness of my *Endowments*, and the *Avocations* occasioned by my present Circumstances; And they that know me nor must be contented to take the Will for the Deed; Who am of Opinion that 'tis better a Thing of Use be had, as well as it can be had, than nor be had at all. The *Design* deserv'd the very best Workman (to whose Lot, I would to God, it had fallen!) but Necessity required such as could, for the present, be found ready to submit to the no ordinary Labour of it.

If the *Style* offend, by the length or Intricateness of some of the Periods, (whereof I am not insensible) a Candid Reader may be pleas'd to impute it to the Abounding of Matter to be crowded in so little Room; which, if *Intelligible*, is as much as is desired. And that it may be so, the Vulgar Reader is requested to read with the greater Deliberation and Attention; and, if need be, sometimes with Repetition; by which Means it is hoped, that Useful Sense may be found to Instruct, tho' there be no gay Flowers to Recreate.

If Fault be found with the *Disproportionableness in Length* of some few of these Discourses; it may be somewhat of *Apology* to lay

The Epistle to the Reader.

lay the Blame upon an Error in the First Calculation of their proposed Number; which afterwards occasioned the breaking some of them into more Particular Discourses, by which their matter was sooner exhausted. And it may also, be further consider'd, that the shortest of these Discourses (if I mistake not) is full of its Subject (which is as much as the longest can pretend to) and if the longest of them could have been reduced to the Scantling of the shortest, it might have been never the less Useful. Wherefore, having herein been govern'd only by the Matter, where this is duly *Learnt* and *Practis'd* it will sufficiently recommend the Discourse of whatever Length it be.

And this is what I especially Desire and Aim at; That my *Readers* would not so much intend what Judgment to pass upon my Abilities, as what Benefit may be got to themselves from my weak Performance; and Conive at my Infirmities while I am Endeavouring their Good. To which End I sincerely beg the Divine Blessing, that is able to succeed the poorest Endeavours, and intreat also the Prayers of all Devout Christians that they may in some Measure tend to the service of Souls, and to the Glory of our Common Lord.

The

The Epistle to the Reader.

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culation of their proposed Number; which
afterwards occasioned the breaking loose of
them into more particular Discourses, by which
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useful. The First Volume.

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For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is; and rested the Seventh Day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it. p. 515

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But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord
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Thou nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy
Man-servant, nor thy Maid-servant, nor
thy Cattel, nor thy stranger, that is within thy
Gates.

For in Six Days the Lord made the Heaven and
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rested the Seventh Day, wherefore the Lord
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The Words of two Parts. A First and

more. The First is of the

Catechetical Course

of

SERMONS

For the whole Year

Vol. I.

Which is the first of two

SERMONS

On a Religious Institution.

And therefore not only

may demonstrate him

Prov. xxii, 6.

Train up a Child in the Way he should go: and

when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Intending, thro God's Assistance, an Explana-

tion of that truly Primitive and Useful Ca-

techism, which our Church has provided for

the First Instruction of all her Members; A

Discourse on a Religious Institution in General ac-

ording to the Import of this Text, cannot Just-

ly be Reckoned either Impertinent, or Unaccep-

table.

These

Sermon the First. VOL. I.

The Text
open.

These Words consist of two Parts. A *Duty* and its *Encouragement*: The *Duty* also consists of two more, viz. The *Act* and its *Object*.

The *Act* here enjoyn'd is to *Train up*, which signifieth two Things, viz. *Instruction* and *Exercise*. Not only *teaching* what is to be done, but *inuring* in the doing of it. *Practice* being the Perfection of *Knowledge*; because, as in some Cases, one may *Understand* better than *Act*; so, in others, *Acting* is the best way to *Understand*. And therefore to *Train*, is to *Teach* and to *Exercise* a *Child* (as *Soldiers* are *Disciplin'd*; whence the Word is *Metaphorically* here used) *in the Way he should go*, i. e. Make him both *Understand* and *Practice his Duty*.

The *Object*, is a *Child*, *in the Way he should go*: Which is therefore twofold, viz. The *Person* to be trained; A *Child*: And that *in which* he must be trained; even, The *Way* wherein he should go.

A *Child*, is *Man* whilst he is *Young*, and first capable and in want of such *Instruction* and *Exercise*. And therefore not only *Years*, but *Ignorance* may denominate him such. All, till they are confirmed and settled *in the Way*, and are yet teachable or persuadable to it, are but in effect *Children*. The *Undisciplin'd* therefore, of whatever *Age*, are the *Persons* to be trained. And indeed, no *Man* ever ought to think himself so much a *Man*, as to be past *Instruction*; who ought always to *Inform* and *Exercise* himself *in the Way he should go* as long as he lives; tho' *Childhood* is the proper *Season* to begin it in.

The *Way*, is the *Course* and *Kind* of *Life* and *Practice*: And that *in which he should go*, is what should be the *Business* of his *Life*; in which he ought to be put betimes, and to continue all his *Days*; Even the *Way* for which his *Nature* was designed,

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signed, for which his *Capacities* have fitted him, and which is *Commanded and Enjoyed* him to walk in: That so he may live like himself; answerable to what God hath *Made* him, He is *capable* of, and *obliged* to: Which is the very *Way of Religion*.

So that the *Duty* here is, to *Instruct and Exercise* in Religion the *Young* and the *Ignorant*, the sooner the better, to know and practice it.

The *motive of Encouragement* hereto is, That when such (being thus *train'd Young*) are *Old*, they will not depart from it, i. e. They will not be in so great *Danger* or *Probability* of being seduced from their *Duty*, nor are such so commonly seduced, as others are. A good *Education* most usually produces a good *Perseverance*: and the most likely way to make *Good Men*, is to give them *Good Discipline*.

The Words thus opened; and this being their *Import*; I shall, for their *Improvement*, insist upon these *Four Particulars*.

I. I shall briefly hint to whom this *Duty of training up Children Religiously* doth properly belong.

II. I shall contribute what I can to revive this almost antiquated tho indispensable *Practice*; by exciting such to this *Duty*, upon whom the *Obligation* principally lies. Shewing the *Necessity* and *Advantage* hereof, in respect to the *Publick*, *Themselves*, and the *Children so trained*.

III. I shall then presume to *Advise* in part, what *Method* such may do well to observe herein, in order to discharge themselves faithfully of this important trust. And,

IV. Lastly, I will essay to make some seasonable *Application* of the *Whole*, that it may become more *Profitable* and *Practical*.

Religious
Institution
to be the
Care of

I. I am to shew to whom this Duty in the Text belongs. This is imply'd in the Relation which is here its Object. For it being a Child that must be minded, it can be no other but the Parent, whose sole Care such are, that is Obliged thereto. And therefore all that bear that Relation ought to take themselves as spoke to herein, whether it be in a Natural, Civil or Spiritual Sence. And therefore

Parents.

1. All Natural Parents, are, primarily and in acceptation of manner, hereby obliged to see to the Religious Education of their Children. Who, next under God, gave them their Beings, out of their own very Bowels, for their Benefit; And therefore as God (whose Image they bear) ought to take the best care they can, for those Creatures they have produced, and in whom they live, (in as much as no Man, the Apostle observes, either did or could, without great unnaturalness, hate his own

Eph. 5. 29. *As his own flesh, and as his own bone, of which he saved himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the word of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, without blemish.* So that the Duty is every way Natural; and accordingly the God of Nature, by positive Laws, both under the dispensation of the Law, and Gospel, hath oblig'd Parents to Naturalness herein. In the Old Testament, we find Parents

commanded to teach God's Commandments diligently
Dent. 6. 7. unto their Children, and to talk to them of them,
Ex. 11. 19. when they sit in their House, and when they walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up. And in the New (which is no less express, tho' more concise) that they should bring (or train) them up, Eph. 6. 4. in the Lord, as in the Lord's way, which is, the way wherein they should go.

Such

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Such is the Obligation of *Natural Parents* to this Duty: And who are not therefore to think that they have done All their Duty, or Well for their Children, so long as they are uninstru^{cted} in the way they should go, which both God and Nature obligeth them to.

2. The Civil Parents herein concerned are *Magistrates, Tutors and Masters of Families*: Who, tho they do not give Being, yet do they conserve the Well-Being of those depending on them; whereby they become a kind of Parent, as they beget them (as it were) anew to the better Enjoyment of that Being received from their natural Parents. And therefore *Magistrates*, as such, in their several places, ought to Countenance and Favour, to Protect and Defend, to Command and Urge the due Practice hereof, among those they have Authority over. Thus good King *Hzekiah* spake: *Chr. 30. comfortably unto all the Levites, that taught the good Knowledge of the Lord. And Josiah for the Priests in their Charges, and encouraged them to the service of the House of the Lord.* 22. & 35. 2.

Tutors and Schoolmasters, who are entrusted by *Natural Parents*, as their Substitutes, are by their very Office especially obliged to assist them herein; as being of most import and moment; without which no Education of Youth can answer the end of that Being designed and endeavoured to be improved by them. And tho such may not be explicitly covenanted with, but only to train up in Humane Literature; Yet so far as even the improvement of this, depends greatly upon Religious Principles; and that all are obliged, in whatever Employment, to design chiefly the Glory of God and the Good of the Commonalty; and that such have, by their Authority and Interest,

peculiar Advantages to this end ; it cannot but be supposed that their very Office implies a farther tacit Obligation to principle their Pupils with Religion ; and whom they undertake to teach *Wisdom*, never to omit to teach *the Fear of the Lord*, which is *the beginning* thereof.

Prov. 9.10.

Householder.

And so the *Householder and Master of a Family*, who is the *Pater familias*, is to govern for God, as well as for himself, and is in his House therefore, to teach *Gods ways*, as well as to command his own *Works*. For in him are united the Office both of the *Magistrate and Tutor* ; he being both what the one is in his Kingdom, and the other among his Pupils. His Family are both his *Subjects and Disciples* ; and therefore, under the Obligation of both in Conjunction, he is much more obliged to this part of the Duty belonging to *Civil Parents*. For all Authority, as it is *from*, so ought it to be *for God* ; and the more multifarious it is, the greater obligation it derives for that end : And therefore the *Householder*, who hath something of all Authority and indeed is every way a *Parent* in his Family, (wherein he is a *Natural, Civil, and Spiritual Parent* ; a *Father* to his Children, and a *Governour and Priest* to his Family) cannot be excused from this Duty of Religious Education.

Clergy.

3. *The Spiritual and Ghostly Parents*, herein also concern'd, are the *Governours and Ministers* of the Church ; who contribute to the *New-Birth* and administer nourishment to the *Spiritual Life*. Whose very Office consists in this Duty, to *train up* all their *Children in Christ Jesus* for God *in the way they are to go*, and whose care in Publick is to guide and further herein the Duty of all other Parents in Private. It appearing hence to be a matter of that moment, as requires and engages the concurrence

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currence of all kind of Parents to promote it, And therefore it ought not to be turn'd off from one to another, because it is not appropriated to One only, but left indefinitely, engaging all that are concern'd any way in the Relation; that what is a Charge too heavy for One, might be made a more general concern to be promoted, as much as in them lies, by all.

The Duty thereof is not of that private and narrow Concern, as seems to appear from the general neglect of it; God having made such a wonderful and extensive Provision for the due execution of it, as if he intended to signalise hereby the great Importance of *training up a Child in the way he should go*. And therefore as I oblig'd my self,

II. I shall now contribute, what I can, to revive this almost antiquated, tho' indispensable Practice: By exciting such to this Duty, upon whom the Obligation principally lies. Shewing the necessity and advantage hereof, in respect to the Publick, Themselves, and the Persons so trained.

1. *The necessity of the Duty* is manifest from the *express Will of God*; who ever since he hath had a Church on earth, hath been pleased to comprehend even our Children with us within the Pail thereof; and whom therefore he will have instructed in his Laws, that he may be known to and acknowledged by them. Only in the Discharge whereof, a Parent can only express that Love and Justice which is due from him to his Child. Because this is Love to his better Part, and Justice to him in the most important concern; a neglect whereof tends to his Ruine, as much as Hatred and Injury can inflict; and is not to be Recompenc'd by whatever else can possibly be done for him. So that He nei-

Job. 11.
13.

that deserves not answers the Relation of Parents that neglects the Religious Education of his Children: who, especially, being in Covenant with, and dedicated in Sacrifice to God, ought not, upon any pretence, to be neglected to be brought up for him in the Knowledge of the Conditions of such Covenant, that they may be able, as they shall become capable, to make them Good: And which they can only do, by being trained up thereto. For they are *born like wild Asses, dumb and foolish, unexpert to the way they are first bridle to; Yea* (which is more and worse) *if they are not set right, they will most certainly go wrong; having Wits naturally as perverse, as their Understandings, are dark, and erring through Ignorance as much as Ignorance.* So that if they could, yet they would not of themselves go right; nor will the undisciplin'd ever do even that little which they can do towards their own Reformation. Besides that *The way wherein they should go is full of Difficulties, steep and rugged; neither easily learnt, nor soon travers'd; wherein there is neither Pleasure nor Success, but by being trained up and inured thereto: It is Use that must make it Natural; which the sooner begun, and longer continued, will increase with delight and profit.* And which (since it must be begun one time or other, and most design it, and all will wish it) cannot be begun too soon, nor deferred, but to both Ends and Ends. *begeth wisdom.* Considering therefore, that, the Will of God, the Obligation of Parents, the State of Children, and the way they should go in, there cannot but be thence perceived an absolute Necessity of their being trained up in Religion. The neglect of it is inexcusable, yea too the Duty were as prejudicial, as it is a Real Punishment. For,

3. The

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12. *The Advantage of this Duty* (which is sufficient to counter the toil and trouble of it) is no less apparent with respect to the *Publick*, to *Parents*, and to *Children* themselves. Its Advantage.

13. *The Interest of the Publick* is no less concerned herein, than promoted hereby, as it alone excites men to be most Useful, Faithful and Active in their Generation; so as to contribute to the Tranquillity and Blessing of their Country, by their Loyalty, Humility and Righteousness, to which the *face of the Bed*, wherein they have been trained, necessarily inclines them. For the want of this men not only retain their natural Depravities, but are confirmed in them to the disturbance of all Good Order, with Feuds and Dissensions. So that Men, the more they are Educated Good and Virtuous, the greater Blessing are they like to prove, by which the City may hope to be *enriched*, and so all Men be obliged by a conscientious discharge of this single Duty. To the Publick.

14. This is confessedly a generous Act to promote the welfare of the *Publick*, tho' to the certain prejudice of our own *Private* Interest. But it lies in our Power hereby, not only to do our selves no Harm, by seeking thus the general Interest of all, but much Good. For this will likewise contribute exceeding much (so as nothing else can) to

Prov. 11.
11.

15. *The Interest of Parents themselves*, on whom the Duty is incumbent. For hereby they will not only have the Comfort of having done their Duty, without which, there can be nothing to support and alleviate the sharp and heavy Sorrows of Children's miscarriages; But in all likelyhood, they will have the Blessing of Rejoycing over the Fruit of their wisely managed Labour. 'Tis Sorrow enough for Parents to see their Children miscarry at all; but it is much more so when

To Parents,
2 Cor. 1.
12.

when they are conscious that themselves are the Cause of it. And tho also it be a great Rejoycing to see them prove well, yet it is proportionably much more so, when it may be reflected on as the Fruit of their pious Care to *train them up* hereto. So that Parents lay up for their future Sorrow or Felicity in nothing more than in the *Training up* of their Children; In whom they certainly hereby, make their own Fortune Good or Bad. And tho there may be Instances of those that were well educated, who proved very bad; and of those of whom no care was taken, who proved very good; Yet are such, both of the one and the other confessedly very rare, and extraordinary. And as the Miscarriages of the one might have proved worse, had they been neglected; so possibly the Improvements of the other might have been much more, had there been more care taken of them. Besides that, it may be, such Miscarriages might be owing to some imprudent Defect; and such Improvements to some unobserved and accidental good Impression made in their Education; and which therefore, abate nothing from the Duty and Encouragement of Parents to *train up their Children in the way they should go*, but rather adds to both, as cautioning them to take more care of all, and to neglect none herein. Especially since finally,

To Chil-
dren.

The Interest of Children also depends so much upon their Education in this Age. For herein they are most *Receptive* of good Instruction, thro' the *tenderness, and freeness, and unprejudicedness* of their Minds, whereby they are more supple to be form'd, more at Leisure to be dealt with, and more impartial to receive Impressions that are Good. And which being received then, will be more likely to *abide with them*; from the virtue of *Prepossession*, the natural force

force of *Custom*, the Reverence always born to our *first Institution*, the unwillingness that appears in most Persons to think themselves to have been *deceived*, and finally from that Assurance grounded on the *Promise and Engagement of God* to assist and succeed an Early Piety. If Parents do their *Duty* herein, which is to *train up their Children in the way they should go*, God will not defraud them of their *Reward*, which is, that *when such are old they shall not depart from it*; For so some read the *Text* in a Promissory Sense, and on which ground do those Petitions seem to be formed in that Prayer we read in the seventy first *Psal*, which are worth perusing. Besides, by such early Institution, Children will also have a most blessed Advantage of making a *greater Progress in Religion*, and consequently of bringing more Glory to God and Comfort to themselves, both here and hereafter. And have the most likely course taken with them hereby to escape Evils otherwise unavoidable. For they are by Nature *Children of God's Wrath*, benighted with *Ignorance*, expos'd to the *Exorbitancies of Youth*, betray'd to every dangerous *erroneous Doctrine*, and if they be not doom'd to an invincible *Unfruitfulness* under *Gospel Ordinances* and the Means of Grace and Salvation, yet they will be necessitated to all the Hazards and Inconveniencies of Delay, from the Uncertainty of Life, the Arbitrariness of Divine Grace, and Difficulty and Hardship of late Reformation, and the Unacceptableness thereof with God, in comparison of that which is Early.

These Instances of the *Necessity and Advantage* of the Duty in the Text, tho' briefly hinted, yet if well weighed and duly considered, I'm sure, are sufficient to excite (with the Blessing of God thereon) to a Conscientious Practice of what they recommend

Psal. 71.

5, 6, 9, 14,

17, & 18.

commend and urge. And oh, that *Parents* (for the *Publick*, there *own* and *Children's* sakes) might hereby be convinced and prevail'd upon to comply with what there can be nothing left to justify the neglect of! In order whereunto (to proceed according to my Method.)

III. I shall now presume to Advise (in part) what Method such may do well to observe herein, in order to discharge themselves faithfully of this important Trust. Not that I shall pretend to intrude or interpose any thing new; as of my own Wisdom or Invention (for this would be neither modestly nor soberly done;) nor shall I be willing to make Additions to what *Christ* and his *Apostles* have designed, and the universal Practice of the *Church* hath successfully used and recommended to us for this very End. And therefore what I propose, is only to admonish what Christian Institution hath been all along received to consist of, and to recommend the use of the very same Method, as our best Guide, in training up our *Children* also in the way wherein they should go. And herein

Baptism.

1. The first thing that occurs is *Baptism*: Which some will have imply'd in the very Word *train up*, one signification of the Word in the Original being *Dedicavit* or *Consecravit*, to Consecrate or set apart to some Holy Employment. This our *Church* hath enjoy'd for any Christian to begin his *Life* with, as well as called on us to Pray that every Christian's *Life* may be according to this beginning. This can neither be begun with too soon, nor can there be a more proper and Advantageous Beginning. For as all are born in Sin, so there cannot be too much haste made to Rescue them from it. This can only

Office of
publick
Baptism.

ly be effected by this *Laver of Regeneration*, which washes off the Pollution of Original Sin, and is the Seal of the Covenant thereby entered into with God, and the Sign and Ceremony of Admission into Christ's Church, wherein the means of Knowledge and Duty dwell, and is evermore accompany'd with the Prayers and Benedictions thereof. And therefore as *Parents* ought not to neglect or defer, so should they use *Baptism* holily. Thereby designing not only a Compliance with Custom, but their Children's Institution in Religion, entering them upon the way in which they are to go, and securing them, according to their Capacity, from the Assaults of Sin, and Vigilance of Satan, for the Service of God and Religion. After which good Beginning,

2. The next thing that offers is *Catechizing* Catechizing.
 them. And this also is what the Root implies from which the same *Original Word* doth come, being read in the Margent of our Bibles, *Catechize*, instead of *train up a Child in the way he should go*. Which is not only the very next thing that *Can*, but all that *Need* be done for imbuing our Children with Religion. This wants neither *Antiquity* nor *Advantage* to recommend it. It is of Divine Institution, and hath ever been observed by the Churches of God in all Ages as the most approved Method for instilling and propagating Divine Knowledge, inasmuch that a good Egesippus Author observes, that there never was a Kingdom put for forty Years after Christ's Passion but what received the Gospel in this Method only. And therefore *Julian the Apostate* began his undermining of Christianity by his Suppression of *Catechizing*: The decay or flourishing of That, depending on the neglect or use of this. For such a Form or Fundamental Prin-

Principles being committed to the Memory, tho' of the youngest and most incapable as yet to understand them, gains the first Possession, and excludes worse things that otherwise would be imbibed, and will be more ready at hand, as Judgment grows mature for Reflection. And being learnt in a set Form of Words, they not only contribute to *Uniformity*, whereby every Member of the Church from their Infancy may be taught to think and speak with one Consent the same things, but also to *Orthodoxness* in Opinion, which is greatly secured by the *Orthodoxness* of Expressions. And since it is hence the rather necessary that one particular *Catechism*, or Form of Instruction should be generally made use of; why not, *above all other* (to be sure *before all other*) that which is in our Liturgy. This being injoyn'd by Authority, and for its *Plainness* soonest to be Understood, for its *Shortness* most easily to be learnt, and for its *Fulness* sufficient to inform.

In Publick. This *Catechism* therefore, Masters and Parents ought carefully to provide that it be timely and duly learnt in Private, in order to be afterwards repeated in Publick. Hereby the Minister may inform himself of both the Parent's Care, and Childrens improvement, The Congregation may receive Satisfaction of the Performance of the Terms of that Condition, on which such Children were incorporated Members with them; viz. That they should be taught so soon as they should be able to learn what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession they then made by their Sureties. Those of the Elder sort, who are not well grounded, may hereby, in an honourable way, take occasion to be better instructed; and Those who are well grown in Divine Knowledge, may also hereby examin their

*Office of
Baptism.*

their Grounds, renew their Vows, and by occasion of both, enlarge their Meditations. By hearing it open'd and explain'd, All who are concern'd may be enabled to explain it also to those whom they have the Care of to *train up* by it; whether by calling them to account for what they have heard, or (if even this should not be perceived sufficient) by proceeding to instruct them in some other Exposition of this Catechism, Catechetically form'd, of which sort we have both great and excellent Variety. In this Method great degrees of Knowledge might be attain'd to, and Persons be early and thoroughly capacitated to take upon themselves their own Profession. And therefore

3. The next thing in order, after Catechizing, *Confirmation* is *Confirmation*. This not only advances but compleats the Institution of a Christian. By this he having first approved himself to Understand it, Undertakes now, in his own Name, every part of his Baptismal Vow, and receives the Benedictions and Prayers of the Church, henceforward admitting him a compleat Member, to the highest and most sacred of her Mysteries; as *train'd* and sufficiently instructed *in the way wherein he must ever hereafter persevere to go*. And here the Tuition ends. Every Christian having gone through these several Institutions, is left to himself to edify upon this Foundation; wherein if he miscarry, the blame will be chargeable on no body but himself; and where it will lie more heavy, as being against so advantageous a Beginning. This is the instituted Method of breeding Men up to be Good Christians; and is a *Training* them from their *Childhood in the way they should go*. It is all that can be done for them, and, in all likelihood (so far as

as any thing in humane Power can be so) will be sufficient. Only, in the use hereof, *Parents* must be admonish'd to set before their Children a *Good Example*, and maintain a *Good Discipline* over them, and *Assiduously* and *Importunately Pray* for them. Without this, no Method of Institution will be sufficient or successful; but with this which is of our own *Churches* prescription a better can neither be contrived or needed, or be more likely to engage the Blessing of God to it.

What therefore remains now, is the profitable Use of what hath been already said, under our last General Head; Which is.

IV. *The Application*, And which I shall make in three Particulars, viz. by way of *Information*, of *Reproof*, and *Exhortation*.

I. *For Information*. Hence we Learn,

Who are
the best
Parents.

I. *Who they are that deserve to be accounted the only best and kindest Parents to their Children*. Not they who scrape together the most Pelf, and train up their Children only to be the Asses to be laden therewith. Not they who most indulge and coddle them, and will venture to ruine rather than cross them. Such Kindnesses as these, Children will have but little Reason to thank their Parents for, who do nothing more for them, (as such rarely do.) Because these are Kindnesses that will make them never the less miserable, but tend directly to make them much more so; being so far from furthering them one Step out of that State of Sin to which they begot them, that they incline to fix and sink them deeper therein. For Wealth and Fondness seduce out of the Right Way; gratify only for a Moment, and that the worse and more corrupt part; and is therefore only such

Kindness

Kindness as Kills, and proves the worst of *Cruelty* in the end. But to Educate our Children in Ways of Virtue that lead to Salvation is a Kindness that will oblige and Profit them to Eternity. It will be daily improving upon their Hands, It will remain to do them Good, when nothing else we have done for them can. And is the only Recompence which, in Justice and Compassion, we are bound to make them for being Instrumental of bringing them into a Being which is a thousand times worse than not to Be, without this. For to beget a Child to Hell, and not endeavour to recover him from that Condition, is the worst of Cruelty.

2. Hence also, we learn the Original cause and source *The Origin of that general Prophaneness abounding in the world. nal of Immorality:* For since there is so natural a Tendency in an early Holy Institution to make men be, and continue Good; the general falling off to Sin and Debauchery can proceed from nothing so much as the want of this. 'Tis possible, indeed, for one, now and then, to become a Libertine tho never so well Educated; But for the generality to miscarry, contrary to the Will and faithful Promise of God, and Deduction of the best grounded Reason, is no way likely to be otherwise accounted for. And therefore we must conclude, that the Reason why the World is so Wicked, is because Parents are so Negligent and Careless to train up their Children in the way they should go. 'Tis they only make the Age so bad and Sin so rise. That make so many more Enemies to God and Religion than otherwise might have been; That train up Soldiers to fight under Satans Banner, to pierce their Crucified Saviour in a more barbarous Manner, than that furious Wretch that stab'd him on the

the Cross; In a Word, That shut up Heaven, and crowd Hell with wandering, seduced, uneducated Souls. They, They are the Cause of all this, and must surely answer it, in that they take no more care to prevent it by the conscientious performance of this their Duty. And therefore,

*The Means
of Refor-
mation.*

3. This may likewise Admonish of the only hopeful way left of even yet suppressing and abating Vices so abounding among us. For 'tis too manifest how prodigiously secure Men live on in a damnable Condition, and how successfully we attempt to convince an Over-grown Sinner. And the Reason is, because they have been trained up in the way of their own Lusts, and the time of Instruction is past with them; and our Artillery play'd against these strongest Holds make but slow riddance. Therefore ought we to turn them upon the more weak and unfortify'd Places; and since we can so hardly reform Men, take more care to instruct our Children and train them up in the way they should go, since being train'd in a wrong way, it is so very difficult to fetch them back. The Fountain being thus dry'd up, the Streams must cease to overflow. And if ever times be better, and Men's Manners regulated, it is Parents must be the Reformers, in whose Power it is to make the next Age (whatever just Complaints are made against this) even what they will themselves. And then farther,

*The Importance of be-
ing a Pa-
rent.*

4. This must needs mind us, how very weighty and important a Concern it is to bear the Relation of a Parent. On which so great a trust is laid, and so much depends; and from which so much ought to be expected; wherein so great Skill, and Care, and Diligence is necessary; and for which so very few are duly qualified. This well weighed, would re-
strain

strain men from entering thereinto, *lightly, wantonly, or unadvisedly*; till they are accomplish'd for the Duty, as well as Enjoyments of it; And would excite such as are already engaged therein to more Care and Industry to Educate as well as Maintain their Children. And,

Office of Matrimony.

5. Lastly, Hence also we may infer enough to condemn the Cruelty of the Papists, who are so far from acquainting their Children with Religion, that they enjoy them to be brought up in Ignorance; and teach them that it is their Duty to continue so. The Bible is prohibited their Schools, and Legends and Story-Books prefer'd there. Their Principles are Selected and Adulterated for them; and then impos'd upon them to be received with an Implicit Faith without examination. So that they are trained up only in the way their Superiour's would have them go in, without knowing whether it be the way wherein they should go or no. And tho they do pretend to train up their Children in Religion, yet have they took care hereby to retain them in so much Ignorance, as may be sure to secure to them their Devotion.

Ignorance encouraged by Papists.

2. For Reproof. And that hence both of Parents and Children.

1. For the Reproof of Parents: Particularly, such as neglect, and such as contradict the Duty of the Text. For,

Neglect of Parents reprov'd.

1. Too many Parents there are that greatly neglect it. Some thro Ignorance, some thro Spiritual Sloth, and some thro Worldly Care and Business.

Many know little or nothing of Religion themselves; having never been trained up therein nor given their minds thereto, insomuch that they being blind themselves, never offer to become Guides to their Children. Others, tho they know more,

yet care not to engage in the trouble of Instruction. And others again have so involved themselves in the Affairs of this World, that they never can find leisure or Heart to consider much the Things that relate wholly to another World. And therefore, what thro the *Ignorance, Laziness,* and *Worldliness* of Parents, few, very few Children are so happy as to fall into the hands of those that do *train them up in the way they should go.* Unhappy this for poor Children! Highly blameable in such Parents! For the Education of our Children in Religion is so necessary in it self, and of so general a Concern in its Consequents, that nothing can excuse its Neglect. If we are *Ignorant* our selves to do it, the greater shame it is, and the more inexcusable. And since the Means of Knowledge are so great, and the Obligation of this Duty so indispensable; why do we not inform our selves, or provide such as are able to instruct our Children for us? For as we are *Parents*, the Care of Instruction lies at our Door; which our *Ignorance*, however it may incapacitate us for, cannot excuse us from it; because it is it self a Fault, and what by assiduous and hearty Pains may be amended, or supplied, and what should incline us the more to have our Children Instructed; that we may not make them as unhappy herein as our selves, and by endeavouring to teach them, may apply our selves to the most likely means soonest to inform our selves. And what tho this is like to cost us the more Pains, thro the neglect of others taking some Pains with us, to have *trained* us up in the proper Season? Yet it is no more than is necessary. And when it is come to this pass, we must do, if not as we could wish, yet as well as we can; wherein
the

the success will abundantly recompence it all; and the present disturbance it may give to our Carnal Ease, be well made up to us by the ensuing and lasting satisfaction it will introduce and entertain us with in our Minds. It is the best pains we can lay out to bring up our Children Servants to God, useful in their Generation, Comforts to us, and Blessings to themselves. Which surely is of that import, as is worthy to be made a Business of it self. To which all other Employments ought to give way; as what may be neglected with less damage, and what cannot be bless'd to us in the neglect hereof.

So shamefully inexcusable are all *Parents* that live in the neglect of this Duty! They can neither answer it to God, to the Publick, to their Children, or to Themselves. Nor should I scruple to pronounce such the worst of Parents, were there not also,

2. *Some others, that not only Neglect, but Contradict this Duty?* Being so far from training their Children up in the way they should go, that they train them up in the way they should not go. And I wish such profligate Wretches were not too common to give occasion of Reproof, who teach and lead their Children, not only by their own vicious Examples, but corrupt Councils and Encouragements in Wickedness. Such are the *Poor*, indulging their Children to Steal; the *Rich*, to be Proud or Covetous; the *Debauch'd*, to be lewd and ungovernable; the *Atheistical*, to be Prophane; and every *Immoral Parent* delighting to see their Children resemble themselves in their Vices as well as Features, and in the *Psalmists* Phrase, endeavour to make them even such, as they are themselves. But let such consider how unnaturally cru-

Wicked Parents

re-vent

prov'd.

Ps. 50. 21.

el they herein prove to their Children, and how hard is the Fate of their Poor Children in falling into the Hands of such barbarous Parents. I know you abhor the Thoughts of Murdering their Bodies; and is not the Damnation of their Souls as great Guilt and Cruelty? Is it not enough that you resolve to damn your selves, but will you also expose your own Children? And what Recompence can you hope to make them for such an Injury; whereas the gain of the whole World is no Price for the loss of a Soul? To you justly belongs that Reprimand (however sharp) which St. Paul gave to *Elymas the Sorcerer, O full of all Subtily and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right Way of the Lord?* For a more mischievous Perversion of the right way of the Lord cannot be contriv'd, nor greater Enmity to Righteousness be express'd nor the Devil more served or resembled by any of his Children, than in the corrupt Education of Young Ones for him; from which if Parents will not cease, they will have no less Reason to fear the Hand of God upon them in some as heavy a Judgment.

Act. 13. 10.

So Reproveable are all Parents, hence, who neglect or contradict this Duty of Principling Children in Religion. On whom the Fault is not yet always to be Charg'd, because the Children themselves are too oft also the only cause of their own Miscarriage. And therefore Ocasion hence must be taken,

Rebellious
Children
reprov'd.

2. For Reproof of Children: Particularly such as are Ungovernable and Refractory to be trained up in the Way they should go. For it being their Parents Duty and their own Good that they should be trained, it is their Fault and Folly not to comply with and

and encourage the same. It is a great Mercy to have such *Parents* as are willing to endeavour it. It is the greatest Kindness *Parents* can express towards their *Children*, and will cost none of the least Pains duly to express it. And therefore must they needs be untoward *Children*, on whom so great Kindness and Pains are wilfully suffered to be lost: and if Obedience is due to *Parents* from their *Children* in any Instance, much more in this, wherein they command for God, and for the greatest Good. And yet how ordinary is it for *Children* to shift off opportunities of being *Catechiz'd*, and to nauseate Good Instruction and Admonition from their *Parents*, as an unreasonable task and tiresome piece of Drudgery? Whereas hereby, they, in the worst manner, requite the greatest Kindness of the Best *Parents* towards them. They abuse God's Mercy, and forego their own Interest, and are therefore the worst of *Children*, because it is only their own fault that they are not made better. And how justly, in Judgment, (may we reasonably conclude) are such usually deserted by God to the most profligate State of Wickedness, who have degenerated under the most pious Education? Their Refractoriness marking such out for Ruine; of whom it may be said, as of the Sons of *Eth*, that they hearkened not unto the Voice of their Father, because the Lord would slay them. For on whom the force of a pious Education hath been lost, there is nothing can be hoped to prevail further to save. And therefore to contribute towards prevention hereof; For a Conclusion I shall add, Hence,

1 Sam. 2.
25.

3. Lastly, *A Word of Exhortation*, And that in like manner both to *Parents* and *Children*.

Parents
exhorted to
Teach.

1. *To Parents*, That they would seriously charge themselves with the due Performance of this Duty towards their *Children*, as what they are principally obliged to, and in the neglect whereof they can never acquit themselves as good *Parents*, nor be able to answer it to *God*, their *Children*, or their own *Consciences* in the great Day of Accounts. That all such as bear this *honourable* Relation, would endeavour to preserve it so; which suffers in Credit by nothing, more justly, than by the *Insufficiency* or *Carelessness* of Men to answer the most important Design and Obligation of it, in the Religious *training up of Children*. That such would endeavour to qualify themselves, by providing and duly using the many and excellent Helps and Means for the principling their Children betimes in the true Religion. That they would take all leasure Opportunities in their own Families for this end. That they would Set apart some fit Portion of Time particularly for this purpose. If on every day, it would not be too often; but (to be sure) on every *Lords Day*, which will be rather too seldom. A constant persisting wherein, would, by *God's* Blessing, improve divine Knowledge both in such Teachers and Learners: and by familiarizing to them the Fundamentals of Religion, render their further Edification not only possible but easie and pleasant. And this is in the Power only of Parents to begin; where the mighty Work of Reformation sticks, and where the neglect is most Inexcusable and Punishable.

Children
exhorted to
learn Religion.

2. *To Children*, My Exhortation is, that they would thankfully and readily comply with such Instruction where it is proffer'd them; and where it is withheld or neglected, that they would supply that deplorable defect, as soon as they arrive to

to a Capacity, by their own greater Care and Diligence, in the use of Helps, as are in plenty ready at hand, to explain to them the Principles of Religion; or by applying themselves to their *Sureties* at *Baptism*, who are engaged and intended to supply the Deficiencies of negligent Parents, according to their Power; or by proffering themselves for Instruction to their *Ghostly Parents*, who would rejoice in such an Opportunity, and both Encourage and Profit them with their Countenance and Skill.

And the sooner this is done the better; tho far better late than never: for,

1. *If you are yet Children in Years*, the more acceptable and successful is your own furtherance of Pious Instruction like to prove. It is your Duty to Know and Remember your Creator in the Days of your Youth, lest you should Die Young, and never be acquainted with him at all; or live to be Old and slip your learning Age so as to be past Instruction and habituated in Ignorance, and then be rejected by God for your neglect of him while you were Young. And therefore,

Eccles. 12.
1.

2. *If you are Children only in Knowledge*; Consider, that you have already run a great hazard, and incurr'd much Guilt; by your past long Neglect; and that being so far behind hand, the greater necessity lies upon you to Speed and Diligence. The Disgrace of your submitting to the Instruction of Children in Religion is not comparable to the glowing Shame of your continuing Children by your Ignorance of it so long time already past. However, it is better to be asham'd, than Ignorant; and to own your past Guilt tho to your Disgrace, than to persist therein to your greater Damnation. It will not be esteemed a Disgrace, to seek for Knowledge, at any Age, where it is wanting;

wanting, but only among the Ignorant, who know not the worth nor are sensible of the necessity of Knowledge. And to avoid the Censure of such, Instruction only in *Private* may well enough be admitted. For the Publick Instruction in the Principles of Religion is, upon many accounts, expedient; Yet private Instruction is also supposed necessary to precede and to fit for it. And where Persons are of grown Years, this may very well be improved to serve in stead of that formal way wherein Children are wont to be examin'd in their Fundamentals in our Congregations. Tho even herein, I am sure there is nothing that will or ought to disgrace, the most Aged Learner among serious Christians. But would all that were Ignorant be heartily Zealous to be Instructed, as they would not stick here so neither should we. Our Compliance with such being manifested by publishing Explications of our *Catechism* for private as well as publick Use; whereby all may arrive to know as much as is required from them to Learn, and be enabled to teach as much as they need to know for the training up of a Child in the way he should go.

It is therefore recommendable to all Persons; and particularly to Masters of Families and Governors, That they would, when they *Catechize*, read some portion of some Orthodox, Plain yet Concise Explications of our *Church Catechism* in order, till they have gone so often over it, as by their after Examination they can perceive it to be both understood and remembered. This as it is a most easy way of Instructing, so will it prove a most effectual Method of Learning. Whereby scarce any will prove too Ignorant to Teach or Dull to Learn, but every *Parent* may do his Duty with

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with Delight and Profit, and train up his Child, of whatever Age or Capacity, in the way he should go, so, as by God's Grace and Blessing; he may never depart from it.

Which God grant, through the Merits of his dear Son! To whom with the Father, and Blessed Spirit, be all Praise, now and for evermore, Amen.

OF THE

Church Catechism

2 Tim. ii. 10.

SERMON

SERMON II.

On all the

Preliminary Questions

OF THE

Church Catechism ;

2 Tim. ii. 19.

Nevertheless the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal; The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity.

THE Doctrine of the *Covenant of Grace* being of absolute Necessity for every one to Understand and become well Acquainted with, our most excellent *Church* hath taken an effectual Care to have all her *Members* Initiated and Trained up in it, even while Children, by making it the Argument of her truly Primitive Catechism; which begins with the Explanation of this Covenant established between God and his *Church*, as the only *Way* wherein we should go, and whereby we must be saved. These Words of St. Paul to Timothy having an evident Relation hereunto, Occa-
sion

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sion will be given in our Consideration of them, to explain that Summary of our *Baptismal Covenant*, in the very Order it is taught us in the *Preliminary Questions*, as they are usually called, of the *Church Catechism*.

In the *Text* are observable Five several Particu- *The Text*
lars. *open'd.*

I. Here is a Supposition of a Covenant concluded and settled between God and Man: *Nevertheless the Foundation [or Covenant] of God standeth sure, having this Seal, [or Terms resolved on and inscribed.]*

II. An Intimation of the Manner of entering thereinto, in the Character given those engaged thereby; Being such as *name the Name of Christ.*

III. A Declaration of the Benefit promised on God's Part: *The Lord knoweth them that are his.*

IV. An Acknowledgment of the Condition to be performed on Man's Part; who is to *depart from Iniquity.* And,

V. Lastly, An Establishment of the Obligation to the Performance of this Condition, in order to obtain that Benefit promised herein: *Let every one* (not do so if they Please, but *let them*) not do it upon their Peril. Taking themselves hereby, bound of necessity to make Good their Part of the *Covenant*, not only as they hope to be ever the better for it, but as they dread being much the worse for having ever been engaged therein.

I. Here is a Supposition of a Covenant concluded and settled between God and Man: *Nevertheless the Foundation, or Covenant, of God standeth sure, having this Seal, with man.*

OR

or Terms Resolved on and Incribed. For *scilicet*, as learned Men observe, signifying only an Inscription on a Seal, and therefore not such *Inscriptions* as were wont to be set on *Foundation Stones*, *Omnis gratia*, for Luck's sake, directs the Word *Scilicet* to be rendred here, not as our Bibles read it *Foundation* but *Covenant*, to which such Inscription on the *Seal* affixed is very proper; containing, according to the usage of those Times and Countries, The Terms agreed on by the Parties concerned.

The first
Covenant.

Such a *Covenant* hath Almighty God been all along engaged in with *Man*, from the very time of his *Creation*; Having made him Upright, and Placed him in a Capacity to have preserved his Innocency, to which he engaged him by that we call the *first Covenant*. The Terms whereof being broken by the Fall, it was again renewed upon other more gracious Terms in the *Second Covenant* of which *Jesus Christ* is the *Mediator*. This is that God now stands engaged in with all Mankind, containing the only Terms on which Mercy is to be expected from him, and which he will never alter to the World's End. It is called in the Text the *sure Foundation of God*, on which alone our Hope can be Built; The certain *Covenant* to be depended on; The everlasting Agreement we stand upon, and must stand by with Almighty God, both as to what he Requires from us, and as to what we are Admitted to expect from him. Consider we then,

Heb. 8. 6.
Second Co-
venant,

Entred in-
to by Bap-
tism.

I. The Manner of our entring hereinto with God: Intimated also here in the Character given those engaged thereby being such as name the Name of *Christ*, and everyone that does so. Which Expression is plainly *Figurative* to denote our being made *Christians*, by having the Name of *Christ* called upon

TO

US ;

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us; thence forward to profess and own our selves as those who have subscribed this *Covenant*, and assum'd to our selves the *Christian Name*; which is what our *Catechism* begins with, for our Instruction, to put us in mind how we became *Christians*; exacting an Account from us concerning this *Name*, even this worthy *Name*, as St. James speaks, by which *Jam. 2. 7.* we are called.

The *Name* there enquired after is called our *Christian Name*, which, as more Honourable, is set before our *Sir-Names*; Being given us when we were first made *Christians* by Baptism and actually entered into *Covenant* with God. So that tho the Children of Believers may be Interested in the *Name of Christ* before they are Baptised, yet have they their Priviledge sealed to them no other way but by Baptism, nor have they *Christ's Name* called upon them without It. This being the Ceremony instituted for this very End, wherein they give up their *Names* to Christ, are listed among his Disciples, thenceforward bear his *Name*, and become visible Members of the *Christian Church*. This is done either in imitation of the antient Practice of Princes, giving New *Names* to such as they admitted into their Service; Thus did Pharaoh when he made Joseph Ruler over all the Land of Egypt; And Nebuchadnezzar did the same when he brought Daniel and his Companions into the Babylonish Court, Or because *Names* were usually so given in the Jewish Church to Infants at Circumcision, to which our Baptism in the main Scope of it succeeds. Whereby moreover being Consecrated to God thro the *Name of Christ*, we only are rendred worthy of a *Name* and begin to be some body. Before which we were *Nullius in Nomine*, Persons of no Account, Strangers to the *Covenant*, and destitute of a *Name*

Wherein a new Name is given

Gen 41.

45.

Dan. 1. 7.

Col. 2. 11.

12.

to

Given By
Stipulation,

Gen. 21.3,
-29, 32.

To mind us
of our Baptism.

to be called *Christian* by. The Assignment of which is also very instructively in our Church delegated from our natural Parents, to whom it doubtless primarily doth belong, to others who present us to our Baptism; as teaching us hereby, that we derive nothing which belongs to our *New Birth* from our Parents, not so much as our *Name*; and that we are not *Born*, but *made Christians*. We are taught therefore, to call those *who gave us this Name* our *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*; As by this Act becoming in a manner our *Spiritual Parents*, since by means of their offering us to Baptism, we were therein dedicated to God. Whereby also they gave Implicit security to the Church, with our Parents, whose natural Duty obliged them as Principles in that Bond, that we should be bred *Christians* and made to understand the *Covenant* they had entred us into with God, in order to perform our Part thereof; of which this *Name* is to put us in mind, being thought on by us or mentioned to us.

As sure therefore as we have been named in *Baptism*, so surely are we Persons in *Covenant* with God. On which account alone it was that we had *Christian Names* given us; whereby as we name the Name of Christ, we signify and own our selves to be so engaged. This *Covenant* we are next to consider in its Terms, as distinctly respecting both Parties.

III. *The Benefit promised on God's Part*, here declared to be *The Lord knoweth them that are his*. This being his Inscription on the Seal whereby he obligeth himself to know (*i. e.*) to own and acknowledge for *His* every one that nameth the Name of Christ and hath Covenanted by *Baptism* with him. The *Benefit* whereof is fully Explained and Taught us in our *Catechism* as importing these three Priviledges.

1. That

1. That we are made *Members of Christ*.

2. *Children of God*. And,

3. *Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven*. These Relations are God's Part of the Covenant, and set forth the Blessing of Christianity, the great Advantage of naming the Name of Christ, and being Baptised Christians.

1. We are hereby made *Members of Christ*; even a Part of that *Body* whereof he is the Head, which St. Paul expressly teaches us is the Church, saying he is the Head of the Body the Church. Which is the Universal Society of Christians all the World over; united into one Body, by one Spirit, even as Called in one Hope of their Calling, under Jesus Christ, its supreme Head; who both Governs and Enlivens it; from whom all the Body by Joints and Bands, having Nourishment ministred and Knit together, increaseth with the Increase of God. So that hereby we become one with Christ, and are put under his Conduct; to be Protected, Instructed and Assisted, which is to be in the most safe and comfortable Capacity of Happiness, both for this Life, and the Life to come.

Whereby we become members of Christ.
Col. 1. 18.

Eph. 4. 4.

1 Cor. 12.

12, 13.

Col. 2. 19.

2. We are made *Children of God*. For being Members of Christ, who is the only begotten Son of God by an Eternal Generation, we become through him (tho by Nature the Children of Wrath as all others are) by the mere Grace of God his Adopted Children; Having Predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself. Which State as it includes Honour, so it assures Favour, Indulgence, and Provision, and after St. John's Example excites us to behold with Admiration what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God! Especially seeing we are warranted by St. Paul hence to infer, what

Children of God.

Eph. 2. 3.

1, 5.

1 Joh. 3. 1.

doth crown all the Promises and Favours God hath
 Rom. 8. 17 covenanted to us, That if Children, then Heirs; Heirs
 of God, and Joynt Heirs with Christ. For,

Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. 3. Lastly, We are hereby made Inheritors of the
 Kingdom of Heaven. Being entituled to all the Pri-
 viledges of the Gospel State here, such as the Par-
 don of Sin, and Sanctification by God's Spirit; And
 to all the Rewards of Heavenly Glory hereafter, such
 as Eternal Freedom from all manner of Evil, and
 Perfect Fruition of all manner of Felicity, which is
 what Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither can en-
 ter into the Heart of Man fully to conceive; but which
 yet God has prepared for every one in Covenant
 with himself, and will hereby abundantly own and
 acknowledge them to be his.

These are the inestimable Priviledges God hath
 set his Seal to, included in his Inscription thereon,
 whereby he hath engaged himself to know them
 that are his. Looking on them through this Cove-
 nant, as Members of Christ, Children of God, and In-
 heritors of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is to know
 them both in the nearest Relation to himself, and
 in the most valuable way of Acknowledgment. To
 this every one has an undoubted Right while they
 remain God's in this Covenant, neither Renouncing
 nor Forfeiting such their Interest in him. For the
 Avoiding of which, it therefore concerns us to Un-
 derstand, and Consider well, what is our next Par-
 ticular observed in the Text,

*Our Pro-
 mise to
 God.*

IV. The Condition Acknowledged to be performed on
 Man's Part, who is to depart from Iniquity. For we
 are not to presume that, so great Priviledges are
 made over to us *Gratis*, without any thing to be
 done on our Parts to signify our Value and De-
 sire of them, because this is not consistent with the
 nature of a Covenant, which is a Conditional Agree-
 ment,

ment, equally obliging both Parties concerned to same Performance. And therefore as God hath herein obliged himself to us for *Invaluable Blessings*, so are we bound thereby to him for a *Reasonable Service*; to which we have set our *Seal*, as that by which alone we claim our Title. And as he hath Inscribed on his Side thereof to *acknowledge us for his*; so have we Inscribed on our Side to *depart from Iniquity*. Rendering him our *Vow* for his *Promise*, as the settled *Terms* of Agreement between God and us.

This also is what our *Catechism* explains to us in the *Promise* and *Vow* we are said to have made by our *Sureries* in our *Baptism*. For the Word *Sin*, tho it is often taken strictly for *Injustice* or *Unrighteousness*, is yet by all concluded to signify here, as in many other Places, more largely *Sin* in general. Both because there is no Reason from the *Context*, to restrain it to any particular kind of *Sin*; and because *Christianity* lays an equal Obligation upon Man to *depart from all Sin*. The *Covenant of Grace* excludeth *Sins* of all kind, both of *Commission* and *Omission*. To *depart therefore from Iniquity*, here implies both the Parts of *Sanctification*, obliging us not only to *Cease to do Evil*, but to *Learn to do well*. Because to *Omit to do Well*, is really to *do Evil*, from which there is no *ceasing*, but by *doing Well*. So that whether our duty be expressed in the *Negative* or *Affirmative*, both are necessarily included. As to *depart from Iniquity*, imports here not only what *Evil* in our *Catechism* we are said to *Renounce*, but likewise what *Duties*, whether of *Faith* or *Obedience*, we are there taught to perform. And so in like manner, as God's *Promise* to us contained *Three Privileges*, so our *Vow* to him consists of *Three Duties*, being the Summ and Substance of the *Chri-*

ftian Religion, viz. to *Renounce* something, to *Be- lieve* something, and to *Do* something, distinguished by these Three Names, the *Renunciation*, the *Creed*, and the *Decalogue*.

*Renuncia-
tion of*

1. The *Renunciation* imports our Obligation to *Renounce* something, and is expressed in the Text by *departing from Iniquity*. It being such a *Departure* that is here required, as may signify and express a *Renunciation*; which implies inwardly to *Detest*, and actually to *Reject* Iniquity, so as not to follow nor be led by it, either as to its Occasion or Act. This is therefore apply'd to a threefold Object, viz. *The Devil and all his Works: The Poms and Vanities of this Wicked World; and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*; They being all comprehended in the Word *Iniquity*, as *Occasions* and *Expressions* thereof. In departing from Iniquity we must

The Devil,

1. *Renounce the Devil and all his Works*, which is *Iniquity* in its *Original* and *Continuance*; being introduced by him at first, and Promoted by him ever since in the World. For by the *Devil* we are to understand the whole Race of *Fallen Angels*; who, tho they be very many; yet are frequently thus expressed by the Name of the singular Number, as one. Either as being subjected to *One* as Chief and Prince of all the rest, called the *Prince of the Power of the Air, that now worketh in the Children of*

Eph. 2. 2.

Disobedience; or because they are all united in one *Devilish Nature*, and act as *one Devil* in Enmity to God and Mankind, for the Promotion of *Iniquity* which is the *Work of the Devil*. Not only as he was the *first Sinner* himself, and *Tempt*s others to Sin; but also as *Divers* the most notorious Sins bear his Image, and are committed after his *Example* and *Institution*. Such manifestly are *Superstitious Usages* frequent in *Divination* and *Incantments*;
Pra-

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Practising *Magick* or *Witchcraft*, or consulting with those that do; *Idolatry* and *Polytheism*; *Malice*, *Envy*, *Pride*, *Lying*, *Treachery*, *Uncleanness*, and *Murder* both of *Mens Bodies* by *Cruelty*, and of their *Souls* by *Temptations*. All which in *Particular*, and every thing that is *Sin* and *Iniquity* in general, we must utterly *Renounce* and *Depart from* as *Works of the Devil*. We must *Renounce*,

2. The Poms and Vanities of this Wicked World.

We must *Renounce the World*, even this sublunary State, however good in its self and convenient for our present Abode, so as not to set our Affections on it, to desire or be solicitous for it, especially more than *Heaven*; or for the *Gain* of its *Riches*, *Honours* or *Pleasures*, or even the whole *World* to incur the *Loss of our own Souls*. Much more must we *Renounce this Wicked World*, or that Part of it which lies in *Wickedness*, made up of *Wicked Men*, whom we are not to conform our selves to, nor must follow a Multitude to do *Evil*; rejecting both the Advice, and Examples of such; withstanding their *Temptations* and disclaiming their *Evil Customs*. We may be *Civil* to, but must not *Sin* with them. *Virtue* we may imitate in any, but *Iniquity* we must depart from in all, as being Separated by our Calling from the *Wicked Part of the World*. That, as the *Apostle* expresses it, *We henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the Vanity of their Mind*: Being not what we *Profess* any further than as we distinguish our selves from the rest of *Mankind* by the *Exemplariness* of our Practice.

We renounce also the *Poms and Vanities of this Wicked World*. The *Poms* importing all such *Theatrical Representations* and *Plays* as are prejudicial to *Morality*, and such *Ostentatious Processions* in Honour of an *Idol* or *Saint*, as offend against *Religion*; and by *Reduction*,

The Poms and Vanities of this Wicked World,

1 Joh. 5.

19.

Rom. 12.2.

Exod. 23.

2.

Eph. 4.17.

duction also, all such Revels and Drunken Riots common at Wakes and Festivals, as are the Scandal of Christianity. The Vanities of this Wicked World, are expressed in nothing more than in the Gallantry, Pride and Luxury so much seen in Sumptuous Buildings, and Furniture beyonds Men's Ability; in affectation of Titles, Place and Respect beyond Desert; and in Prodigal Expence both of Estate and Time in Apparel beyond Decency and Sobriety. All which such Pumps and Vanities we Renounce in this our Baptismal Vow, and quit them to the Enjoyment of the Wicked, who look not beyond this World; who mind Earthly Things. And yet that we may keep out of the Reach of Iniquity, and make Good our Part of the Covenant, we must also Renounce,

Phil. 3. 19.
And all the
Sinful Lusts
of the Flesh.

Gal. 5. 19.
20, 21.
Jam. 1. 14.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Eph. 4. 22,
23, 24.

3. All the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. We must Renounce the Flesh, even the unmortified Corruption of our Hearts, so called because of the near Alliance which it hath to our Fleshly Part, by the Means of our Senses. We Renounce the sinful Lusts of this Flesh, even the manifold disorderly Affections and Evil Concupiscences of the Soul, by which we are seduced to Actual Sins. And we Renounce All such Lusts, be they never so dear, never so difficult to Oppose, never so Profitable, Secret, Pleasant or Small to keep; All without Exception, and without Reserve, Cleansing our selves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, and perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God; being obliged not only to a state of Mortification but thorough Conversion; Putting off concerning our Former Conversation the Old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts, and being renewed in the Spirit of our Mind, and putting on that new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.

Such

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Such is the *Renunciation* we have *Covenanted* for, and must begin our *Departure from Iniquity* by; which as it discovers to us the *Hostility* of our *Spiritual State* we are list'd into, so were we duly enflam'd with a desire of *Conquest*, what a mighty *Reformation* would be like to be effected by it? And yet is this but the *Negative Part* of our *Covenant*, that restrains us from *Sin*; which includes further, in the *Affirmative*, our *Obligation to Duty*; the Principle whereof being *Faith*, the next thing in it is,

2. *The Creed*, importing our *Engagement to Belief*. *believe Something*. A State of *Unbelief*, being a State of *Sin*; the *Departing from* which, obligeth us therefore also to *Faith*, without which it is impossible to please *God*; And the *Object* hereof, which our *Catechism* teacheth us to *Believe*, is, *All the Articles of the Christian Faith*. These are a *Select Number* of the most important *Doctrines* which are the *Foundation Principles* of the *Christian Religion*; Depending each on other, and so tyed together, as a *Body* is, by several *Joynts* (for so the Word *Article* signifies) that the denial of any one of them endangers the overthrowing of the whole *Faith*. And therefore are they all to be *believed* fully and wholly by us. For which Reason our *Catechism* insists more particularly thereon, both by requiring the *Rehearsal* thereof, and teaching what is to be chiefly learned thereby. Our further Notice whereof is Reserved to another more convenient Place.

And because *Faith* (*St. James* hath taught) if it hath not *Works* is dead, being alone, therefore doth our *Duty* include also *Obedience*, the *Object* whereof in our *Baptismal Vow* is,

Obedience.

3. *The Decalogue*, Importing our Obligation to *do something*; which is also necessary for the avoiding the *Iniquity of Omissions* which we have no less *covenanted to depart from* by our Promise to keep *Gods holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of our Life.*

By *God's Holy Will and Commandments* is meant, whatever he hath reveal'd in *Scripture* so to be. Most, if not all, of which are summarily comprehended in the *Decalogue*, or *Ten Commandments*. Concerning which our *Vow* obligeth us to *Keep*, and *Walk in them*; which is to observe and practice by them in the general Course of our Lives, and is but another Phrase for yielding our *Obedience* to them, yet so as including the *Sincerity* and *Integrity* thereof. For we are Obligated to *keep them* as a Trust committed to our Faith, to *Walk in them* as the only *way wherein we should go*, and to persist intently in them even to the end; which are the necessary Qualifications of *Evangelical Obedience* that may only be relied on for Salvation. And therefore the *Obedience* we have *vow'd* must be *Sincere*; Undissembled and Hearty, to distinguish it from the Sin of *Hypocrisie*, which is a false and feigned Pretence of obeying God when in reality we only serve our own selves; and of *keeping his Holy Will and Commandments* when we design thereby to compass only our own Designs and to serve a Turn; and to *Walk in the same*, when indeed it is the Lusts of our own Hearts we follow and are acted by; and therefore cannot be thought to Obey God by what is never intended for him.

Our *Obedience* also must be *intire*; by being the *Luk. 10. 27 Obedience of the whole Man* (of all our *Heart and Soul, and Strength, and Mind,*) to the *Whole Will of God* (an Offence in one Point, deriving Universal Guilt.)

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Guilt.) And that at *all Times*; (with *Uniformity* and *Duration*) *all the Days of our Life* (He only that *endureth to the End* being qualify'd to be *saved*.) By which, yet, is not required a *Perfect State of Innocence*, so as to exclude all *Transgression*, because this is impossible; but only such a *State of Penitence* as the *Grace of the Gospel* will accept of instead of *Innocence*; wherein all our *Involuntary Failings* which through *Ignorance* or *Frailty* we commit, will upon our *Prayers to God*, in the *Name* and thro the *Merits of Christ*, be forgiven us; and even our *Voluntary* and *Presumptuous Transgressions*, when we *Repent* of and forsake them, will not upon the same *Score* be imputed to our *Condemnation*.

Mar. 10.
22.

This is the *Obedience* we have *vow'd*; which, together with our *Creed* and *Renunciation*, make up our *Religion* and compleat that *Part of the Covenant*, wherein we are by *Baptism* engag'd, and whereto we have set our *Seal*, to *depart from Iniquity*. We proceed therefore, as now it is reasonable, to consider the remaining *Particular* distinguish'd in the *Text*. Which is,

V. Lastly, *The Obligation establish'd to the Performance of such our Promise in order to obtain the Benefit there- by Covenanted for. Let every One (not do as they List, but) not do it upon their Peril; taking themselves hereby bound of Necessity to stand by their Vow, and make good their Part of the Covenant; not only as they hope to be ever the better for it, but as they dread being much the worse for having ever been engaged therein.*

Obligation
of the Bap-
tismal Vow
implying.

And what the *Text* thus briefly intimates, our *Catechism* very fully Expresses in that *Acknowledgment* required to be made hereof, in that *Question* which says, *Dost thou not think that thou art bound to Believe and so Do, as they have Promised for thee?* The *Answer* being, *Tes verily; and by God's Help so I will.*

will. And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me to the state of Salvation, thro Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Lives end. In which Words the Obligation is Own'd, both in a Peculiar Manner and for very Proper Reasons.

The Manner of,

1. The Manner in which we are taught to Own our Baptismal-Vow is very remarkable in these Four Particulars.

Declaration of Consent.

1. The Declaration of our Consent to what before had been promised for us in our Names: [Yea verily,] hereby taking the Promise on our selves, and actually agreeing to the Covenant; assuming it as our own Act and Deed; as being made for us only on this Condition, which otherwise would become null and void. And therefore that we may not forfeit so many great Benefits and Privileges, we have been instated in by Virtue of that Promise made for us, we are taught thus now to Declare our Consent thereto and take it upon our selves.

Resolution to perform.

2. The Publication of our Resolution to execute and make Good, to our Power, what we declare our Consent to [And by God's help so I will.] Which is a fixt and peremptory Ratification of our Vow, and what we, upon choice, determine to stand by; not in any Confidence of our own Strength, who are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves; but in full Assurance of the Divine Assistance; which is always ready to the Willing; and by which thro Christ strengthening us, we can do all Things.

3 Cor. 3. 5.

Luk 11. 13
Phil. 4. 13

Thankfulness for the Mercy.

3. The Profession of our Gratitude for such our Engagement [And I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this State of Salvation, thro Jesus

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Jesus Christ our Saviour.] The Design of our being in Covenant with God being for our own *Salvation*; to deliver us from the State of Sin and Death, wherein we were *Born*, and to restore us to a State of Holiness and Life Eternal to which we are called in our *Baptism*. In this *State* we are, as much as can be, *secured to God*, and prevented from our own worse Choice for our selves; and are *secured of all God's Mercies to us* for our Encouragement and Comfort, through the Favour of God in Christ; whereas Millions of his Creatures, both Angels and Men are destitute of this Mercy. For this therefore we can never be enough *Thankful*, nor too much *Solicitous*. And therefore is added

4. Lastly, *The Expression of our Desires to answer the Obligation thus own'd and confirm'd and enjoy'd in by us.* [*And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my lives end.*] Desiring nothing more, than to oblige God to make Good his Promises to us, by our very best and utmost Endeavours to Keep and Perform our *Vow* to him; Depending on, and Praying for the *Grace of God*; which, by Preventing giveth the Will; by Assisting giveth the Power; and by Perfecting compleats the Act: *Being confident of this* Phil. 1. 6

ry thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.] Such is the Solemn Manner in which we are taught to own the Personal Obligation of our *Baptismal-Vow*. And this is no less Remarkable (As we said) For, 1. It is a very proper Acknowledgment of the Obligatoriness of its Obligation.

2. The very proper Reasons of its Obligatoriness intimated therein. Such an Acknowledgment of our *Vow* importing our obligation to make it Good; from the very Design therein intended, the Faith engaged, Assistance offered, Honour concerned; The Reasons ableness hereof, from
Motives

Motives appropriated, and *Rewards* proportion'd. All which are so many Arguments, to make Good our *Baptismal-Vow*, and to *depart from Iniquity*, because *renaming the Name of Christ*. The Urging where-with, in order to reduce all to Practice, as it is the chief End of this Discourse, so will I make it the Conclusion of it. And therefore Consider with me here, That thus to *Renounce and Believe*, and *Do* in order to *Depart from Iniquity*, is

The Design
intended in
Baptism

1. The special Design intended by our thus *Covenanting with God in Baptism*. Men becoming *Christians* only to become *Holy Persons*, and upon that account owning themselves to be in a *State of Salvation*; having giving up their Names to *Jesus* who came to *save his People from their Sins*; Command-
Mar. 1. 21. ing it by his *Precepts*, Teaching it in his *Doctrines*,
1 Joh. 3. 8. Encouraging it by his *Promises*, Urging it by his
Tit. 2. 11. *Threats*; so that by not reforming according
to our Engagement we frustrate the whole in-
tent of the *Covenant*, and are Baptized into it not
at all to the Purpose it was designed for. For
what signifies our *Covenanting*, if we bind not our
selves thereby? Or our Professing the most True
and Holy Religion, while we retain our Sins and
are made never the better for it? For we are not
to think Religion a meer *Name*, only for Distincti-
ons sake, but an Holy Institution to Reform our
Manners. And therefore to call our selves by the
Name, and yet to contradict the End, and to Pro-
fess *Christianity* while we Practice *Heathenism*, is
to boast of *Education* while we betray *Ill-Breed-
ing*. And this is, in truth, to discover our own
Indocibility, having made no improvements un-
der the Greatest of Advantages: And which there-
fore appear to be flung away upon us, and we to
be altogether unworthy of them. And therefore

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Men (by all the Reason in the World, and if they will pretend to account for their Actions) are absolutely obliged either to *Renounce* their *Profession* or their *Iniquities*. For what can any Man think to say for himself, while he Pretends to *Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith*, and to know 'tis his Duty to *Depart from Iniquity*, and to be *Holy in all manner of Conversation*, as also the Advantage of so Doing and Peril of Neglecting this; while he yet retains his Sins so contrary to his Faith and Allegiance, and Hopes and Fears? If he will not *Depart from Iniquity*, why doth he still *Name the Name of Christ* that obligeth him to be Holy? And if he *Names that Name*, why then does he retain still his sins? Or if he doth; What can amend him, whom such a Profession cannot? Or what hath he left to depend on, who frustrates the very End and Design of the Gospel? And where would he hope to be safe, whom the *State of Salvation* cannot save?

Such an one must needs be Self-condemn'd already, because he owns *Christ* and yet sides with the *Devil*. Neither is he bad for want of Means to be better, but because he will not be made Good by any Means. So that there is no other way of answering the Design of being made a *Christian*, but by living a *Christian Life* according to our *Baptismal-Covenant*; which can do us no Good, any further than it makes us Good; because it is only *Intended* for this, and is abused where it effects it not. For which, further,

2. *Our Faith is most solemnly herein ingaged.* A Faith engaged. Promise was made in our Name, and we have own'd our selves to be bound thereby, with *Thankfulness*, and *Desire*, and *Resolution* to make it Good. So that by adhering to our Sins, we not

ON-

only frustrate the Design of our *Covenant*, but violate the sanctity of our *Oath*; having *Vow'd* to answer the *End* thereof, by doing our part to be saved, in being admitted into this *State of Salvation*. And therefore Sin not only Abuses but Breaks and Dissolves such *Covenant*. Which being Mutual between God and Christians, can be vailid no longer than while kept on both sides; Neither can God be tyed to his Word any longer than while we make Good Ours. And if then we will not depart from *Iniquity*, notwithstanding our *Vow* to Renounce it; neither is God bound to shew us any Mercy, notwithstanding his Engagement to save us: He remaining Faithful, tho he denys us that Happiness which he Promised under those Conditions which we have neglected.

And now let us seriously lay to Heart this Consideration also, that so plainly shews the very Terms upon which we *Christians* venture to continue in our Sins; as being no other than *Perjury* and *Damnation*.

Now nothing in the Judgment of all Men is more sacred than an *Oath*; nor a greater Disgrace than a wilful Violation thereof: because That when broke leaves Men no assurance of Trust and Fidelity. A Man that is once perjur'd being no longer to be trusted. For what can tye and oblige him whom his *Vow* cannot? Therefore for our Vows and Credits sake it concerns us, since we are engaged thereby, to endeavour to keep it. For if we make no Conscience of keeping our Faith with God; who may confide in us? And if we prefer any Sin to his *Promises*; how can we be fit to trust our selves? So that a more Faithless Forelorn Wretch cannot be thought on than a *Wicked Christian*; having broke his *Vow*, and put himself

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himself out of *Covenant* with God, and released God from all Obligation of making good any of his Promises to him; Insomuch that there is no *Covenanted Mercy* left for such a one; and if ever he be saved, it must be (neither he, nor any one else can tell how) in a way God never declared he would save any one, and much less such an one as would not be saved in the way God would have him.

Be not then deceived, God is not mock'd: Neither must we think to play fast and loose with him, as we wantonly impose upon one another. For since we have given God our *Faith*, it must be made good either in our sincere Performances or final Ruine. There's is no persisting in our Perjury with any Safety; but either we must stand to our *Vow*, or fall under our *Doom*.

And 'tis surely the stupendous Grace of the Gospel by *Christ Jesus*, and the Long-sufferance of God towards Sinners, that hath indulg'd to us the invaluable Privilege of *Repentance* and Renewal of our violated Faith. That though we have broken our Word with God, yet if we will even yet return to our Allegiance he will accept us, so that the renewal of our *Vow* to him shall still oblige him to all his *Promises* made to us. And he will stand to his Word, though we have broken ours, if we will but give him our Faith again and engage to make it good to him at the last. And unless then we resolve to persist in our Perjury, and Repent our selves of our ever having been engaged by our *Baptism* to God's Service, and purpose rather to be enslaved by our *Lusts*, and choose to release God of his *Promises*, rather than quit our *Sins*, there can be no Neglecting or Delaying hearty Resolutions of returning to our Duty,

Duty and sincere Endeavours of Renewing our Covenant with full purpose of Mind to continue in it to our Lives end. For which (be it again consider'd)

Assistance
offer'd.

5. We have herein, Strength and Assistance sufficient offered us. Even he that hath called us to this State of Salvation proffering us Help by his Grace to remain therein, and to perform all that he hath engaged us to. Infomuch that it may be confidently depended on, that no Man in the World ever violated his Baptismal-Vow, so as to be ruin'd by his Transgressions, for want of Help to keep and Renew it.

Indeed, We are not to suppose Help forc'd upon Men, but it is offer'd to all. God never saves men against their Wills, nor damns any but such as first Will it to themselves. And if Men cannot make good their Part in the Covenant, it must be, either because they never try'd what they could do, or did not try by their right Means, or did not try thereby enough, or else because this Help God proffers to assist with, is insufficient. Whereby our Continuance in Sin and breach of the Covenant does necessarily fasten a Reproach either on our selves, or on God's Grace, and concludes us Negligent or God Impotent.

And, indeed, considering the importance of our Interest concern'd, one could not think that Men would be wanting to themselves herein, were we not undoubtedly assur'd of the Almightyness of God's Help, which necessarily reflects all the Blame wholly upon Men themselves. For the Christians Help is special Assistance, assured to him by Covenant, and doth not consist in an Arm of Flesh, but the Almighty Grace and Spirit of God that Strengthens with might in the inner Man, and worketh in us, both to Will and to do. And therefore

Eph. 3.16.
Phil. 2.13.

fore tho our *Lusts* are too strong, and the *Devil* too subtle, and the *World* too tempting for us; Yet the *Grace of God* is sufficient; and *Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World; thorough whom,* 1 Joh. 4.4
We, who can do nothing of our selves, *can do all things.* 'Tis true, our *Saviour* himself hath Mat. 19. 24
own'd how hard it is for a rich *Man* to enter into the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And there is no doubt but it is as hard for any other *Sinner* to enter in with any *Sins* about him unrepented of. Every *Sin* excludes that Place; and even the least is as a *Camel* at the *Needles Eye*, for any thing we can do towards removing it out of the way thither. But what with *Men* is impossible, is not so with *God*, to whom all things are possible. For he can turn the hardest *Heart*, and remove the most *Mountainous Sins*, and do as much for us, and more strange and difficult Things than is the getting of a *Camel* through the *Eye of a Needle*, to Help us by his *Grace* to keep our *Vow* to him by departing from *Iniquity*. Yet all this *Help*, as extraordinary Great and ready at Hand as it is, is baffled and lost upon us if we will continue in our *Sins*. And after all this, that *God* hath done for us if we will do nothing for our selves; What can we say, or whom can we blame? Such *Help* neglected must needs leave us *Helpless*; and in just Judgment provoke *God* (who will not suffer his *Holy Spirit* always to strive to no purpose) to deliver us over into the Power of our *Sins*, which we will not leave, to be possess'd and worried thereby in endless *Misery*. Since then we may be happy if we will; not to be so, will make us *Miserable* indeed. Because we perish, not for want of *Help*, but in spite of *Help* to save us. Moreover,

Honour
concern'd,

As to our
selves.

Rom. 6. 21.

Religion.

1. *There is honour concern'd herein:* Disgrace ever attending the Violation of this Covenant: Disgrace to our own *Persons*; Disgrace to our *Religion*; Disgrace to our *Fellow Professors*; yea Disgrace to our *Common Lord* and Author of our Profession. So that in *Honour* we are bound to stand by our Engagement, on which depends the Reputation not only of our *Selves*, but of all we bear any Relation to. For to remain in Sin, under such an Obligation to quit it Reflects foul Disgrace,

2. *On our own Persons*, as chargeable with *Infidelity*, *Perjury*, and *Hypocrisy*, which are the foulest of *Vices*, only the Commonness of which could abate of their Deformity. For he must be an *Infidel* that lives contrary to what he pretends to Believe, and as such may be supposed to do, who do not Believe. And no Man can be more *False*, than he whom Vows cannot bind; nor a greater *Cheat*, than he who pretends one Thing and doth another. All, or any one of which is absolutely inconsistent with Reputation; Being *those things* whereof we are (or should be) as *St. Paul* hints, now *ashamed*: it being a glowing Shame to *Name the Name of Christ*, and remain under the Guilt of such *Iniquities*. And yet, were the Reflection only *Personal*, such Sinners might, with less wonder, out-face it. But alas, this Reflects also

3. *On the Christian Religion*: which fares the worse in the World's Esteem for such Mens professing it. For while it hath no better Effect on Mens Lives, its Enemies or Strangers may reasonably suspect it as either *False* or *Useless*. *False*, because so little regarded; and *Useless* because so little Successful. And what a Discouragement is it to Profelytes to be fond of an Institution that works no Reformation? 'Tis this only sinks the Value of

of our Profession; being Misrepresented, Disparaged and Bely'd by the Vicious Lives of *Christians*; As if it either Taught or Allow'd Sin, and had no other Intent or Power but to distinguish Men, not by their Actions but Names only. Yea, and what a Scandal doth this further Cause,

3. *To our fellow Christians?* even the whole *Fellow Christians.* Church of *Christ*; whether consider'd in that Part of it only that is Militant here on Earth, or that which is already Triumphant in Heaven? For being all under the same *Vow*, they may well be suppoed to live the same Lives. And while then, Most or Any that *Name the Name of Christ*, do yet retain their *Iniquities*, even the most Pure and Virtuous on Earth will be suspected to do so too; and (as it usually happens) be esteem'd but Hypocrites and so be the worse thought of and treated for professing to do otherwise. Nor, while such claim Relation and are of the same Family, can one even hope to be out of the reach of this Disgrace, though removed hence from them into Heaven. Even the Saints Triumphant there, being in danger to be judg'd on (by such as do not distinguish) by the unworthy Conversations of their Brethren here; and so Heaven it self be slander'd and its Inhabitants disgrac'd. And for whose sake therefore it were heartily to be wish'd, that Vicious *Christians* would either openly renounce their Alliance, or more strictly imitate their Manners. Neither yet can such Disgrace be bounded here, which falls foul, even

4. *On our Common Lord and Author of our Profession:* Who will be thought to have been much like *Christ himself.* his Followers; and to have liv'd as such do, who do nothing like him; And so be censured as an Impostor, wanting either *Probity* or *Authority*;

as either Teaching no better, or not having Power to enforce any better regard for whatever he did Teach. And if Christ's Example obtain so little regard among such as profess to be his Followers; how can it be expected that ever such as are Enemies or Strangers to it should be induced to inquire after it or be convinced by it; By whom shall he be Honoured, that is set at naught and Misrepresented and Abused by his own Subjects and Vassals? *Do not* such (as St. James observes) *blaspheme that worthy Name by which they are called?* and *Crucify the Son of God* (as St. Paul expresses it) *to themselves afresh and put him to an open shame?* And what a Baseness is it that any should *Name the Name of Christ* for no other purpose but to vilify and reproach it? That *Christ*, who hath done and suffered so much for the Good of Sinners, should suffer so great Dishonour from their continuing so? And therefore, it were heartily to be wished, even for the Credit of our *Own Persons*, of the Best Religion, of the Best Professors of it, of the most Blessed Saints, and of the Son of God himself; that if we will not be so Generous as to *Depart from our Iniquities*, we would be so Honest as to Renounce the Name we go under; and not claim any right to a *Covenant* meerly to violate and disgrace it. For as *Wicked Men* are the Scandal of the *Creation*, so are *Wicked Christians* the Scandal of *Humanity*: Prostituting not only their Credit, but that of all concerned with them. If then we have any Sense of *Honour* (the most tender and choice of all Blessings) left us, our Christian Engagement will surely oblige us, upon this account also to stand to our *Covenant* and *Depart from Iniquity*. And for this too,

3. There

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3. *There is a peculiar Motive appropriated; from the Name we bear; thro whom we are called into this Covenanted State of Salvation..* So that a Christian, even upon this account, is under some Obligation and Consideration to quit his Sin and perform his Vow that otherwise he would not be, to urge and convince him the more hereby. For being called through and by that Name under which the Son of God was humbled; to live a Mean and Tiresome Life, and Die a Painful and Shameful Death for Sin; How can we bear and own that Name, and yet love Sin? For is it not hard to View, with Seriousness and Attention, the Sufferings of *Christ* in his Life, but especially in his Death (wherein the hainous Guilt of Sin, the fierceness of God's Wrath against it, the Severity of Divine Judgment for it is so manifestly discovered) without Dread to retain still the Guilt of our *Iniquity*? For how can we love that, for which *Christ*, through whom we are Called and whose name we bear, so much suffered; for which God, who called us, was so angry, and for which nothing less could atone? Oh! what must we have suffered had not *Christ* suffered in our stead! And unless we are in Love with Ruine, how can we seek to our selves the Danger he hath delivered us so hardly from? How basely ingrateful are we to persist in Sin that put him to that extremity for us? To Sin under his Name, who dyed to save us from Sin? He spared not his Life for us, and cannot we part with our Lusts for him? Of all the Passages therefore of *Providence* to awe us, this of *Christ's* Sufferings is instituted into a solemn Ordinance, as a Memorial, whereby we are to shew forth his Death till he come; The Remembrance of this tending most effectually to succeed

read the Design of the Gospel, as most evidencing in him the Evil of Sin, the Love of God and the Personal Danger of the Sinner, to constrain us (for his very Name's sake) to depart from Iniquity; Which thus appropriates a very powerful Motive for that end, included in it. In a Word. For this, finally

Reward
proportioned.

6. There is Reward sufficient proportion'd: No Covenant having been made upon more Advantageous Terms; so that hereby bearing the Name of the best of Masters and serving for the greatest of Wages, there can be no fear of parting with the most profitable of our Sins to loss, nor of experiencing any of our Labour in the Lord in vain. To be a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, is well worth all required from us to Renounce; Merits our Belief, and fully Recompences our most difficult Obedience. What will move, whom such Promises cannot? And if not by this Name, there certainly is no other Name under Heaven by which any one may hope to be saved.

Such invincible Obligations hath the Christian to be true to his Calling in making good his Baptismal Vow. And, Oh, that Men would then be more considerate and more sensible of their Profession! And would but ask themselves, why they call themselves Christians, and would Remember the Terms on which they are made such. For to be a Christian (we see) is not only to be Baptised, but to Answer our Baptism and make good the Promise that was the Condition thereof. A Wicked Life doing more to Unchristian us, than ever Baptism did to make us Christians. And therefore the Name without Performance, is but a meer Cheat to our Selves; whereby God will not be imposed upon, neither can we reap any profit by: There be-

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being not a more forlorn State than a *Christian in Sin*, except that of a *Fiend in Hell*. For to sin under any Temptation is very Deplorable, but to be resolved in Sin against all Obligation to the contrary is desperate Villany.

What Reason then, have we all, hence to bewail the Strength of Corrupt Nature, that shews it self thus in *Christians*, by generally prevailing in them to withstand and break through such Engagements? To what a Depth of stupid Insensibility are we sunk, that are not moved more effectually hereby? And from what an Height of Innocence are we fallen that need all this Force to raise us up again? And what can there be further to expect or to depend on, if all this fail to affect us?

Oh that we would, therefore at length, attend more considerately to our *Calling*! And weigh the Obligations our Profession hath laid us under! Which, surely, can do no less than create a loathing of our Sins, They appearing so very Unreasonable and Sinful; And endear to us that Sacred *Name* which thus engageth us against them, and does us the greatest Kindness, as delivering us from the worst of Evil.

Let us then, search out our Sins and sacrifice them all to such our most Holy Profession, to which they have already done so great Disgrace and Prejudice. Let us no longer, in vain, Seek or Desire to Reconcile them together. But since, of necessity, *One* must be quitted; let us be so much *our selves*, as to forsake our Sins and hold fast the *Profession of our Faith* without wavering. Let us re-^{Heb. 10. 2 3} new with fresh and greater Resolution our Engagement to Virtue and Holiness; that we may shew our selves neither *asham'd* of nor a *Shame* to that powerful *Name* by which we are called. And

since, thro God's unspeakable Mercy to us in *Christ*, we are *Christians*, let us endeavour to live as *Christ* did ; to make good his *Name* upon us in our Lives ; to avoid the Guilt of *Taking his Name* (even in this Sense) *in Vain* ; to Vindicate his Authority ; to Propagate his Honour ; To return (in some Measure, and to our Power) his *Love* to us, and our *Pow* to him ; that so we may be the better and not the worse for being *Christians* ; And may therefore *Depart from Iniquity* that can alone make us worse, because we *Name the Name of Christ* that intends us to be so much Better.

And this God, of his infinite Mercy and Grace, vouchsafe to us all, for the sake of his Son our Dearest Lord? Amen.

SERMON

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SERMON III.

ON THE

First Article

OF THE

APOSTLES CREED.

Heb. xi. 6.

But without Faith it is impossible to please him: For he that cometh to God, must Believe that he is,-----

AS the First Step towards a Reformation, according to the *Negative Part* of Religion is to *Cease to do Evil*, and we therefore in our *Baptismal Vow* were first taught to *Promise to Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this Wicked World and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh* (which was the *Principal Argument* of the last Discourse,) So the next, according to the *Positive Part* of Religion, is to *Learn to do well*, whereof *Faith* being the Principle, We are next engaged to *Believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith*, *The Creed.*

Faith, And Required, in our Catechism, to Rehearse the Articles of our Belief, And informed in our Text, that without Faith it is impossible to please God: For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, Implying these two Propositions,

1. That *Faith* is the Principle of all Religious Adoration and Practice. For without it, it is impossible to please God, And he that cometh to God must believe. Where to Please and to come to God, can Import no other than Religion and Worship, whereby alone we can please or make Approaches towards him. And therefore without Faith there can be no Religion, and just so much of Religion there is as there is of Faith. And that this may not be wanting, we are also here taught,

2. That the Foundation of Faith is the Being of God. For as he that would Please, and Come to God, must Believe, so he must necessarily believe that he is. And these Two Points as they ought First to be well learnt, so are they what our Catechism first Instructs us in; requiring an Account of our Faith, and Directing us to profess it, by declaring our Belief in God. And this Faith, that we may duly Understand, and be thereby able to please God and to draw near to him, I shall now Apply my self with our Catechism to Explain it as to its Name, its Manner of Rehearsal, and the Subject Matter it respects.

Its Name.

I. As to its Name, It is simply express in our Text, by the Word *Faith*, which our Catechism calls also *Belief*, and the System it teaches us we call our *Creed*, and distinguish it from all others by the Name of *The Apostles Creed*. The Import and Reason of each of these Names it is fit none should be a Stranger to. And therefore to

to acquaint the Young and Ignorant herewith, Let such know,

That the Word *Faith*, however made a Term of great Ambiguity, affording Argument for hot Disputes and Nice Distinctions, yet as meant in our *Text* and *Catechism*, is designed to import the Doctrine to be *believed* concerning the *God-head*, which in both, is the Principle of all Religion; comprehended in *one General Article* in the *Text*, illustrated and enlarged into *Twelve* in our *Creed*; Expressing the Faith, wherewith God is to be *pleased*, and approached to; taught us *dispersedly* in the *Holy Scriptures*, and compendiously thus deliver'd for the Ease and Capacity of Learners and the Unity of all true Christians.

It is called our *Belief*, from the First Word in it, *I Believe*: As also our *Creed*, from the same Word, which in Latin is *Credo*; and peculiarly *The Apostles Creed*, and that either, 1. For its *Antiquity*; Being composed in or near the *Apostles* time, and according to their Number consisting of *Twelve* distinct *Articles*. This is probable by their *Writings*, (most of which were indited after this *Composure*) that there was some brief Form of Words taught Christian Converts, called the *Form of Doctrine delivered to them*, The *Form of sound Words*, the *Faith once delivered to the Saints*, and the *Traditions* taught them; which many and ancient Interpreters understand of this *Creed*. Or, 2. For its *Consonancy* to the *Apostles Doctrine*, which they taught, and is contained herein; equally to be received, and rested upon, upon the Account of *Faith*, however more hath been revealed by them, and is necessary to be regarded by us, upon the account of *Obedience*.

Rom. 6. 17
2 Tim. 1.
13.
Jude v. 3.
2 Thes. 2.
15.

II. *The Manner of Rehearsing this Faith*; which is what our *Catechism* expressly Requires, and our *Text* implies, as what is ever supposed in, and frequently joyned in *Scripture* to the Act of *Believing*; and of equal Obligation therewith. To *Believe* being to be considered, as supposing *Faith* confessed; As a *Confession* or External Expression of that *Faith* so supposed; And as both the *Faith* and *Confession* are of necessary and particular Obligation. Here therefore, for the Understanding how we are to *Believe* and Express our *Faith* wherewith God is approachable; and upon what Ground any one proceeds, when in Rehearsing his *Creed*, he professeth *I Believe*, I shall briefly speak to these Three Particulars. 1. The Import of such Belief. 2. The Duty of Confessing the same. And, 3. The Obligation incumbent upon all Professors thus both to *Believe* and *Confess*.

*What it is
to Believe.*

1. *The Import of such Belief*, required in the *Text*, and Confess'd in our *Creed*. Which, with most Reason and Probability, being taken according to the Nature and Design of such a short Comprehension of Christian Verities, ought to be understood in its greatest Latitude and most popular Use, in order to a firm Perswasion of Mind concerning the Truth of those *Articles* profess'd. To the making up whereof these

Three Things are Necessary. 1. *A Competent Knowledge and Understanding of the Articles Believed*. Without which it cannot be known what we are to *Believe*; or we shall *Believe* we know not what. Nor is such Blind Assent *Belief*, but only *Credulity*; and consequently not *Duty*, but a *Sin*. Therefore are *Faith* and *Knowledge* so frequently Joyn'd, and sometimes put for each other in the

Scripture

Scripture. Thus the *Samaritans* express'd their *Faith*, to intimate its Strength and Certainty, we *Ja. 4. 42.* know that this is indeed the *Christ, the Saviour of the World.* And *St. Paul* having occasion to name Believers, describes them to be such which Believe and Know the Truth. And of himself he says, *I know whom I have believed.* All *Infidelity* is founded in *Ignorance*; and one no more than the other is consistent with the *Christian Profession*, with respect to its *Fundamentals*; which all are bound to Know as much as to Believe in order to *Salvation.* The Consideration whereof is an *Unavoidable Reproach* to the many grossly *Ignorant Christians* among us, who are *Infidels* so far as they are *Ignorant* of their *Creed*: the Knowledge whereof, none are excused from, so far as it is necessary to Principle them in Religion.

2. Another Ingredient of such Belief, is a *Sincere and Firm Assent to the Truth of what we Profess to Believe*; Wherein its very Essence does Consist; and which necessarily followeth Knowledge: Truth known commanding Assent; whereof the *Devils*, who are said to believe and tremble, are an irrefragable Evidence. And therefore to Believe the *Articles of our Creed* is to Apprehend their Truth so as to be able to say *Amen* thereto; or to answer in the Affirmative when asked the Question, *Dost thou Believe*, &c. or to subscribe to them, if occasion be to shew our *Orthodoxy* and that we are no *Hereticks.* *1 Tim. 4. 3.* *2 Tim. 1. 12.* *Jam. 2. 19.*

3. But the Principal Ingredient of all, and that which crowns and perfects the Act of *Believing*, is a *suitable Practice of Repentance and Obedience*, whereof it is naturally productive, without which Effect none can be saved, and without which, it ought not to be accounted *Faith.* For our Lives will

will ever be Just according to our Faith: it being necessary to Will as we Believe; so that if we Will amiss, it is because we Believe not aright; every wilful Act of Sin proceeding from Infidelity. And therefore if we Live not according to the *Articles of our Creed*, it is because we want *Belief* of them either in Habit or Act. Either Assent and Perswasion are wanting, or else they are very weak and imperfect, or suspended and intermitted, or however not Actually exercised at that Instant we do amiss. Infidelity of some sort or some degree or other being at the bottom of all Sin. A thorough actual Assent to Christian Principles being necessarily productive of Christian Practices. Inasmuch, that the only reason why the *Devils Belief* produces nothing but *Trembling* is because they are not in a State to be advantaged by such a Perswasion, nor concern'd in it as a Means to attain any thing by it; otherwise, the *Devils Faith* in a Christians Capacity would not fail to make a Glorious Saint.

To Believe therefore, is to Understand, and Assent to, and Practice after the Truth professed. We must Know before we can Assent, and then only may we be said to be Perswaded when we Practice accordingly. And in this Notion are we obliged to Believe all the *Articles of the Christian Faith*.

Confession
of our Be-
lief.

2. Consider we now the Duty of confessing the same: Being what we are taught in our *Catechism*, and do practice in our *Liturgie* for Publick Worship; And what appears necessary in General, upon the Account of such Faith, whether consider'd in its Act which is Spiritual, and consequently Immanent, Internal, and Invisible, and which Confession is therefore requisite to render Visible and Communicative; or in its Object; which is supposed to be Infalli-

Infalible Truth, which desires Light and deserves
 the most publick Acknowledgment; Especially,
 the God of Truth having Commanded us to *Confess* Luk. 12.8.
him, in his Truths, *before men*; and appointed this Phil. 2.11.
 as one way of *Glorifying him*, to which he hath an-
 nexed *Salvation* for its reward. And *In particular*,
 the Obligation becomes still more binding even to
 every single Christian; not only because *Faith* be-
 comes effectual only by particular Application,
 but because every one must stand or fall by his *own*
Faith, (Not by the Faith of the Church, as the
Papists are taught to Believe,) which therefore
 ought to be manifested by a particular Confession.
 And therefore tho we are taught to Pray in the
 Plural Number, *Our Father*, &c. Yet are we Obliged
 to Rehearse our *Credo* in the Singular, *I Believe*,
 &c. to mind us that tho we may and ought to
 Pray for one another, yet every one must and can
 only *Believe* for himself. Besides that a single Re-
 hearsal secures it in the Mind and Memory, not
 easily to be disregarded, or soon forgot, being
 so frequently revived by a fresh Recital; And
 more lively expresses our constant Fidelity to God,
 as a Repetition of our Christian Watch Word,
 learned at our *Baptism*, when we were listed un-
 der Christ's Banner. It also manifests our Unity
 amongst our selves, and our Agreement with the
 whole Church as real Members thereof, entitled
 to its Privileges and sharing in its Devotions.
 And, Finally such a particular Confession of the
 Faith of One Christian may tend to Confirm and
 Edify another in his. And the mutual Benefit of
 all layeth an Obligation upon every one in Particu-
 lar.

Such Considerations ought to move and direct us
 in a ready Performance of this Duty; That when-
 ever

ever we are invited to make a *Confession of our Faith* we do it Heartily, with Reverence and Resolution. That we do fix our Thoughts upon the Certainty and Usefulness of the Truths we are about to Profess, the Happiness of those that know them, and the Misery of such as are Ignorant of them. That we do Thank God, that what is made Necessary to our Salvation is made so manifest to our Understandings, so Evident as to free us from all Doubt, and yet so Mysteious that all the Wisdom of the World without the Help of Revelation could never have discovered them unto us. We should Sincerely and Intirely yield our Positive and Particular Assent to the whole *Creed*, and every *Article* and *Truth* thereof: As what the *Church* hath from Age to Age delivered for Truth, and to which the *Holy Scriptures* bear Witness. We should Declare our Assent in expresse Terms and with an Audible Voice, as to what we are not ashamed of but Glory to own, and resolve to stick to, and Conduct our Lives by, and venture our Souls at Death on, and if Need be sacrifice our Blood for: To signify which, the Custom hath long prevail'd of ever Rehearsing the *Creed* in a Standing Posture, and for Men of the Sword to draw at the same time; And for all not only to conclude with an Unanimous *Amen*, but to repeat every *Article* distinctly and implicitly to seal it with an hearty Assent, carrying the first Word [*I Believe*] through the whole Body of the Confession. Which tho but twice express'd, yet is to be supposed and supplied in the beginning of each *Article* and every single *Truth* contained therein; because without it we can neither have *Creed* nor *Confession*.

Those therefore seem hence guilty of great Indignity done to so solemn a Part of Divine Worship,

ship, who are wont either to *sit Still* or *stand Mute* at the Recital of our *Creed* in our Publick Congregations; Refusing to give an Account of their Faith (contrary to an Apostolick Injunction) when demanded of them by the Church; Concealing what they seem *ashamed* to acknowledge; and not acknowledging at all what is not made theirs by a Publick and Manifest Consent.

1 Pet 3. 15.
Luk. 9. 26.

Having thus shewn both the Nature of *Belief*, and the Duty of *Confessing* it, an ordinary Capacity may Understand what he is to mean and intend, when he, in Rehearsing his *Creed*, saith *I Believe*, viz. "I know, and am Perswaded, and am Govern'd by the following Divine Truths; which I here publicly declare, with all Thankfulness, Submission, and Devotion, to the Glory of God, in Unity with his Church, to the Edification of others, and establishment of my self in the true Religion."

And that thus we may more heartily *Believe* and *Confess*, Consider we also in a Word;

3. *The Obligation incumbent upon all Professors thus to do.* This is not to be looked upon as an Indifferent Thing either of our own Wills or within our own Power, but an Indispensable and Advantageous Duty; yet wholly the *Gift of God*, and as purely the Effect of Divine Grace and Inspiration, as *Conversion*, *Repentance*, or any other saving Grace, whereof this is the Principle from whence they flow, and wherein all others are Virtually contained. Unbelief therefore is in express Terms in Scripture called *Sin*; and hath *Condemnation* entail'd on it, and sore Punishment; even *strong Delusion* and *Vengeance*, denounced against it; As implying a Sauty Rudeness towards God and his Truths, Reviling and Discouraging

Necessity of
Faith.

Jo. 16. 8.
9. 3. 18.
2 Thes. 2.
11. 12.
1. 8.

all Believers, and absolutely Incapacitating for the Divine Favour; forasmuch as *without Faith, it is impossible to please him*, and only by Faith that we may hope to be justified.

To which Faith that we may, then, attain, it will concern all to advert to the Advice of our
 Heb. 3. 12. *Apostle*, and Take heed lest there be in any of us an Evil Heart of Unbelief. This there is at First in all, and we shall never be wholly rid of it; but is an Evil to which we shall be ever inclined; and may easily be Deceived by; and which without Great Care will prove of very dangerous Consequence to us. Let us beware of Indulging our selves in Negligence or drowsy Inobservance, Ignorance and Carelessness. The Enemy takes his advantage of our Carelessness, and Sows always his Tares while Men Sleep. Let us shake off Sloth that Indisposeth us to serious Attention on the Doctrines propounded, to Examine their Grounds and Weigh the Reasons inducing to Believe them. Let us Disperse and Quit all Corrupt Dispositions of Soul, which always obstruct the Entertainment of that Doctrine which does Prohibit and Check them, and denounces Punishment and Woe against them. Men of Corrupt Minds are naturally destitute of the Truth, and Reprobate concerning the Faith; which therefore
 1 Tim. 6. 5. the Apostle joyns together: It being impossible to Love Sin, and Actually to be perswaded of Truth. Men only truly believing those Articles which they Practice. And then we may be sure we Believe our Creed, when we Live it; and are Believers while we are Virtuous, Devout, and Righteous, which as it is to be our Aim, so ought we to Pray for Divine Grace and Assistance to succeed our own Endeavours herein.

Having

Having thus hitherto discoursed to you of the *Name* and *Rehearsal* of that *Faith* which leads us to God, and shewed the *Nature* and *Necessity* of both *Believing* and *Confessing* our *Belief* in order to please him, the *Order* of our *Method* and *Nature* of our *Argument* brings me to Consider the *Christian Faith* also,

III. Lastly, *As to the Subject Matter it respects.* Which expressed in the *Text* in one *General Article*, is in the *Creed* explain'd by *Twelve particular Doctrines* concerning the *God-head*. For to *Believe that God is*, in the *Text*, is to *Believe in him* as represented in our *Creed*. And that is in this *Threefold Respect*, viz. *As to his Existence*; *As to his Essence*; *And as to his Unity*. *Believing that he is*, and *That he is such an one as he hath Revealed himself to us*. Even *One* supreme Being, under the true *Notion of a God*, distinguished into *Three several Persons*, of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, which divide the *Articles of our Belief* that do *Explain the God-head* in several *Doctrines* distinguishing each from other by their several *personal Properties*, and *Operations*.

I. The First Thing therefore to be *Believed* is the *Existence of God*; Which as it is the *Fundamental Doctrine* of all *Religion*, necessary to be *Believed* by all that approach to please him, so is it the *First Truth* contained in the *First Article* of our *Creed*, to be first learned and intended in the *Confession* thereof, in these Words, *I Believe in God*; implying, what our *Text* expresseth, *That God is*. This is a *Truth* so *Bright* that nothing but *Carnality* which obscures *Reason* ever sought to *Extinguish*. Men necessarily becoming *Wicked Fools*,
That there is a God.

Psal. 14. 1. before they can find *in their Hearts* to Say or Think *there is no God*. Wicked, such are in making so bold with God as to Question his Being, who if he *Be*, will suffer none to *harden himself against him and Prosper*; And the Folly of such discovers its self, in its Confidence without the least Assurance, against true Interest, and Contrary to the clearest Reason. For

Job. 9. 4.

1. *No Man can be possibly certain that there is no God*. Nor did ever any yet pretend to such Assurance. The utmost that hath ever been alledged for *Atheism* amounting but to a bare Possibility that there *may* be none, and only essaying to prove that it is not altogether necessary that there *must* be one; which after all leaves unavoidable Doubts whether there be a God or no; and which there may be, for any thing that was ever yet said to the contrary. And therefore,

2. *To determine with Confidence, that there is none, is against a Mans Interest*. Because he leaves an Opinion wherein is confessedly no Danger for one that is apparently hazardous. For to *Believe there is a God*, even tho there were none, is altogether Beneficial without the least Prejudice; as being the Principle from whence Men do Good and are restrained from doing Hurt; and whereby no Loss is hazarded of more than their Lusts, that are most Mischievous; or at the utmost of some Temporal Convenience, the want of which is abundantly recompenced by the Present Content and Future Expectation it affords, and without which it would be impossible either to Live safely or Die comfortably. And to think there is no God, supposing it true, can be of no real Advantage but of certain Prejudice; because it leaves Men nevertheless lyable to Croeses and Pains,

Pains, and Disasters, and Doubts, and Fears, and Sorrows, and Death; yea certainly it exposes hereto and leaves them nothing to Support or Comfort them, when every thing in this World hath fail'd and forsaken them. Insomuch that if there were no God, it is confessedly best that it should generally be believed that *there is one*, that we may be provided against the Worst; and not be *Confident*, where our Opinion can do no Good but exposeth to so much Hurt. Especially, since,

3. Lastly, *There is all the Reason in the World to Assure us that there is a God*; who hath discover'd to us his *Existence* all manner of Ways whereby it is capable to be discover'd; even by such Audible and Visible Significations and Tokens of his Being, as we are capable of understanding, in his *Word and Works*; And by imprinting a *Sense of himself in our Minds*, making us not only capable of Perceiving but Inclined to Acknowledge him.

1. *His word* proves his Being, so far as we can prove it to be his *Word*. And hereof we are as sure as that there ever were such Men as are said to have written the Books it consists of, and that the Books we have were written by them. For which we have all the Evidence that can be given of any thing Past. That they were sufficiently qualified for Writing them appears, as having sufficient *Knowledge*, (because sufficient Opportunities) of well informing themselves of the Things whereof they wrote: and as having approved *Honesty* in Writing no other Things than what they certainly Knew. In their Writings they profess *Sincerity*, and Appeal to the Testimony of such as might, and would have discovered their Falshood, had they had either Cunning or Temptation enough to have published any. And

finally, we are sure that what they have Written hath all the Characters of Divine Truth. The Matters revealed by them, are truly Worthy of God and Necessary for Man: Things of the greatest Import and Use. The *Manner* also of their Revelation is such as discovers the Hand of God visibly therein; With many Visible and Audible Significations, and Tokens of his Presence; With Prophecy and Miracles. And the *Success* which the Doctrine of these Writings hath had is such, as none but God could give, against the Powers of the Devil, the World, and Mens Lusts, in all Ages manifesting it self to be the *Power of God unto Salvation*. To which if Regard and Credit be yielded, and for which there is so abundant Reason, there can be no Doubt left of the *Existence* of God, whose *Word* is Revealed and Received among us.

2. *His Works* prove his Being, even where his *Word* will not be taken. *The invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World being* (as the Apostle Argues) *clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and God-head, so that they are without excuse*. If we see things Made, we know they had a Maker; and the Nature of the Work discovers the Author, as by the Effect the Cause is known.

The *Works of God*, are those of his *Creation* and those of his *Providence*.

The *Works of Creation* both in their *Contrivance* and *Origination* are a Glorious Manifestation of God's *Existence*.

The *World*, may be consider'd in its whole and intire Frame, wherein so vast Variety and exact Harmony are every where Visible; or survey'd in its several Parts; In the *Heavens*, where we behold
the

the Sun to rule by Day, and the Moon and Stars to Rule by Night, in exact Motion, curious Order, producing strange Effects in the Air; Wind and Rain, Thunder and Lightning, Snow and Hail, Heat and Cold, variety of Seasons, Weather and Tempers, all affecting the Earth; which we see Cloath'd and adorn'd with Plants of various sorts and admirable Beauty and Usefulness; furnish'd with great store of Living Creatures of several Kinds, and wonderful Make, from the almost In-visible Mite to the prodigious Elephant; with Bowels full of hid Treasures, and Useful Minerals; with full Veins of Living Waters, circulating in Springs, Fountains, Rivers, and Seas; which have all their Use, and all their peculiar Beauty and Wonders. Singly for themselves speaking out the Praises of their Author; and all of them together, in one Universal Consort, with one Harmonious Voice, proclaiming How manifold God's Works are, in what Wisdom he hath made them all! and how full the Earth and World are of the Divine Riches Mercy and Bounty! But the Creation is a vast Field; in which we may easily lose our selves and Atheism together, and meet with God in every Path we advance through therein. But he appears no where more visibly and in less Room than in our selves, made after his own Image, the Top and Perfection of this visible World, the Effect and Result of Divine Wisdom, and the Creature of his Counsel: Consisting of a Body, fearfully and wonderfully made; Of a Soul so subtilly compos'd as to be inscrutable even to it self; the Capacity and Union of which with the Body is the Miracle of the World tho familiar to our selves.

All these are Things Actually existing before us; in the Contemplation whereof, singly and together,

ther, the Wisdom and Power and Goodness discoverable will puzzle and amaze us, in conceiving how Things should be as they are without a God. Being all beyond humane Contrivance, and many Things before Humane Existence; yet there is nothing but was Made, because nothing can possibly give Being to it self, no more than it can be both Before and After it self, and so both Be, and Not be at the same time. *Be*, as giving Being (Action necessarily presupposing Being) and *Not be*, because to be Produced. If then all things which were made, were made by some other, that Other which produced them, either was it self produced, or was not; And if not, then have we already an *Independent* Being. If it were, we must at last come to something which was never made, or else admit a Circle of Productions in which the Effect shall make its own Cause, or an Infinite Succession of Causalities, by which nothing will be Made; both which are equally impossible. Something therefore must be acknowledged never to have been made or to have Beginning, which is *Eternal*; the which the *Atheist* is forced therefore, most unreasonably (as in its place shall be shewn) to attribute either to the World as it now is, or to that Matter whereof it is Composed.

This so Transient a View of the Workmanship of this Great Fabrick of the Visible World discovers thus clearly the Infinite Power and Wisdom of its Contriver. The Builder is known by the House, that none Believes can build it self, or that Time never was when it was Unbuilt, or that it came at last to be Built only by Chance. For

Heb. 3. 4. *if every House is builded by some Man, how much more (as the Apostle argues) must he that built all things be God?* And

And as thus the *Works of Creation*, in their *Contrivance* and *Origination*, do prove that *God is*; so also his *Works of Providence* both in the *Common* and *Wonderful Effects* thereof, apparent among us, no less prove the same. For God only that could make the World, can Preserve and Govern it as it is. All things in it being directed to operate for some End; and nothing being Superfluous, Useless or Wanting, to answer its very best End. No Wisdom or Power but Infinite can bound the Surges of a Tempestuous Sea; Sustain the Globe of the Earth in its proper Place; Keep Order and Harmony among Qualitys and Humours so Diverse and Contrary to one another; Restrain and Change the Exorbitant Passions of Men; Infatuate Evil Counsels, turn them against the Contrivers thereof, and make them subservient to the best Purposes, and the very Ends they are designed against. What, but an Infinite Knowledge and Goodness, can hear and answer the most secret Prayers? Deliver in Extremity of Trouble and Danger? And openly bring to Light *1 Cor. 4. 5.* the hidden things of Darkness in order to Reward Virtue, and Punish Vice?

And tho the Equity and Judgment of the Dispen-
sations of Providence are not always a-
like visible to us; yet God, whose *Ways are*
past our finding out, and who designs a Wise
and Good End in all Events, will Discover and
Vindicate the Rectitude of his Governance in
its proper Seasons, and never forgets his
Justice, however at present he may forbear
the Exercise of it. *Who so is Wise will observe*
these things and they shall hereby understand the *Pf. 107. 43.*
Loving-Kindness, as also the Wisdom and Power
of the Lord; which are so Common and Constant
among

among us. And to reach the Attention and Conviction of the more Unwise and Stupid, there are also Uncommon and Extraordinary Manifestations of *Omniscience* and *Omnipotence* (even Miracles of Knowledge, in *Prophecy*, and Miracles of Power, in *Wonders*) besides and beyond the Ordinary Course of *Providence*, commanding and overawing

Psal. 9. 16. *Assent from the most hardened, that the Lord may be known by the Judgment which he executeth; and that*
 Psal. 135. 6 *whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in Heaven and in Earth; in the Seas, and all deep places.*
 Psal. 58. 11. *So that a Man shall say, verily there is a Reward for the Righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the Earth.*

But the Consideration of *God's Works* is a Noble and Delightful Entertainment, sufficient for the longest Life, and what may last us an Eternity. And therefore as it is Impossible to say all, so have I endeavour'd to say as much as I well could, in the Hints I have given hereof, where the least that can be said is evidently Unanswerable for the Proof of a Deity. Proceed we now to consider,

3. Lastly, *The Sense of himself which God hath imprinted in our Minds*; Making us not only Capable of Perceiving, but Inclined to Acknowledge him. There having not been at any time in any Place any People discovered upon the Face of the whole Earth that hath not owned a God. For as for those who were accounted *Atheists* among the *Heathens*, it was not upon the account of their Believing there was *No God*, but because they could not believe their *Idols* to be God, (for which reason the *Christians* also were charged with *Atheism* by them) and therefore they really were the most Religious Persons of their time. And admitting that now and then some few have denied that there

there is a God in opposition to a General Consent; yet what are they in comparison of the rest who have owned a God? Mankind being esteemed never the less Rational, for some few Natural Fools which may be always found among them; And had not such been very few and singular, there would never have been so much notice taken of them. Who yet, how Confident soever, could never produce any considerable Reasons for their Opinion; which only a Love for Wickedness maintained; which natural Conscience could never well digest, or be always at quiet under; and by whom Retirement, Seriousness, Darkeness, and Apprehensions of Death, have ever been shunn'd by all Art and Endeavours as intolerable. Now no satisfactory Account can be given of this, but that either *the Notion is Natural* and what every Man brings into the World with him; and then he that denies it is Unnatural and Defective in some Faculty essential to Mankind; either wanting or not using Reason; or else *the Notion is Traditional*, and what Men have been at first taught, and have successively taught one another throughout all Generations from the Beginning to this Day. And if so, then this first Teacher was either God (and then there is a God) or else some Cunning Designing Man, who set abroad this Opinion, as a *Politick Invention* to preserve Order and Good Government, which Rulers have greatly countenanced ever since and punished all that question'd it. Yet this is but bare Conjecture and very unlikely to be true; since it began with the First Man that we have had any notice of (who could have no other Teacher but God) and hath continued ever since through all Generations of Men that we have heard of in all Parts of the World; which

which Time, that never fails to wear out the Fictions of Opinion and unmask and discover the Fallacy of ungrounded Persuasions, hath not been able to diminish, but rather greatly Confirms and Improves. So that the Notion of a God is apparently a Dictate of our Nature, and a Mark set upon his own Workmanship, signifying to whom we belong, and Prompting to the Acknowledgment of him as our Author.

Hence therefore no one ought to think himself excusable if he be not thoroughly convinced *That God is*; and does not seriously endeavour to fix and improve such a Notion by often and intense Consideration of these things which are most proper and apt to represent God most clearly and lively to our Minds. We should resolutely stop our Ears, and refuse to hearken to the *Atheistical* Discourses of Prophane and Wicked Persons of what Rank, Note or Esteem soever they may be in the World; Abhorring an Opinion so Uncertain, Unsafe, Hurtful, and very Unreasonable. And above all, we should take care to Conform our Practice to such our Belief; Living as Men who are sensible that there is a God, by whom we live, and without whom nothing can have either Life or Being. We should Entertain the most high and honourable Thoughts of him, and the meanest and humblest of our selves before and in comparison of him; Acknowledging his absolute Right in and to us and our Dependance on him, to submit to his Providence, to approve of all his wise Dispersations, to desire his Favour, to Court his Love, to Trust his Providence, to Obey his Laws, to make him our Chief Good, to address him with our Praises, Thanksgivings and Prayers, frequently and earnestly calling upon him to Open
our

our Eyes that we may see, and our Ears, that we may Hear, and our Hearts that we may Understand his Being, and clear up our *Faith* by *Good Works*, which most truly speaks our Profession, and reports the Temper and Complexion of our Mind, and will be the only thing that will distinguish and separate us from Infidels at the last.

II. We Proceed now to Consider the *Essence* of God; being obliged to believe not only *That he is*, ^{What God} but also *that he is such an one as he hath Revealed* ^{is.} *himself to us*, both in his *Nature* and *Unity*. The notion of the *Only True God* being as Necessary to a *True Religion*, as the *Belief* that *there is a God* is to any Religion at all. And therefore *he that cometh to God must believe that he also is*, what really he hath revealed himself and would have us to think him to be. *Without which Faith it is no less impossible to please him*, as denying him in *Essence*, whereby we destroy his *Existence*. For the Name of God is attributed to many; and *St. Paul* tells us of *them which by Nature are not God's*; So that there ^{Gal. 4. 8.} is a *God by Nature*; And others *which are called Gods*, but by Nature are not so, having neither Power nor Being, but either only in the false Opinions of deceived Men, such were the Gods of the *Heathen*; or derived to them from the only True God; such are *Magistrates*, designed by God to Rule, whom the *Scriptures* call God. But 'tis the only ^{Jo. 10. 34.} *True God* we are to Believe in, distinguish'd by way of Eminency, as *the God of Gods*, *The most High*, ^{Dent. 10.} and *God over or above All*. These Titles become ^{17.} proper to him, and incommunicable to any other ^{Gen 14. 18.} because of his *Divinity*, which he only hath; and ^{Rom. 9. 5.} which signifies an *Infinite Perfection*, which is the Original of all his other Attributes.

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Therefore, as we are to *Believe that God is*; so that he may be, at the same time, in our Minds, we are next to *believe* that he is the most *Perfect Being*; Ascribing all imaginable and possible *Perfection* to him, and separating and removing all manner of *Imperfection* from him. To this end he is Represented to us, as a *Spirit, Eternal, Immutable, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Wise, True, Holy, Just and Good*. And what we are to Understand, and how to be Affected by these, I shall hint in as few Words as I can for the Assistance of *Faith* in a due Apprehension of the *God* professed to be *Believed in*.

A Spirit.

1. To *Believe then in God* (as to his *Essence*) is to *Believe him to be a Spirit*, because more perfect than *Matter* which is not compatible with several other Perfections. The Positive Notion whereof, whatever it may be, yet it may suffice us to conceive of it by way of Negation. That it is not *Matter*; without Figure or Parts, not Visible to our Bodily Eyes, nor subject to any of the Laws of *Matter*. And tho in this sense we call *God a Spirit*, yet are we not to think him only such a *Spirit*, as *Angels* and the *Souls* of Men are, which are but *Creatures*; but infinitely higher and above any other *Spirit*: His nature being infinite, that he cannot be otherwise declared. And therefore we are taught to call him so, because in regard to our Weakness we have not any other Term of Excellency to Express or Conceive of him by; And this being the Highest Excellency in our own Nature, we therefore in Honour Transfer it to God. And in this respect principally, God is said to be a *Spirit*, because he is not a Visible, Sensible, Corporeal, but Spiritual Nature; tho Infinitely more Refined and Excellent, than any of those *Spirits*

we

we are able to form an Idea of. And tho we find him, so often in the Scriptures, to have such Members ascribed to him, as we have in our Bodies; (Not only a *Soul*, but particular bodily Parts, such as *Heart, Arms, Hands, Eyes, Ears, &c.*) yet must we remember that this is only done, *In Condescension to our Weakness*, who are not able to conceive of a *Spirit* without some kind of Resemblance to something below it (as the Glories of the next Life are signified to us by the Enjoyments of this;) because otherwise we should necessarily be wholly Ignorant thereof. This may signify to us the *Acts of God*, as they bear some likeness to those performed by us; with those Members ascribed to God, noting rather his Visible Operations than his Invisible Nature to us. Some also observe that it is only those Members which are the *Instruments of the noblest Actions*, and only under that Consideration; that they are ever used to represent God to our Notion; *Tast* and *Touch*, which are the grossest Senses extending no further than Corporeal Things being never ascribed to him. And others intimate as if this might have respect to the *Incarnation of the Son of God*; as being thought expedient, tho not to teach Men to believe him Corporeal, yet to give some Prænotices of that *Great Mystery of Godliness*, to be revealed in due Time according to his Promises.

'Tis certain, however, that we must not conceive of God according to the Letter, but the true Intent of such Expressions. For he is nevertheless a Pure *Spirit* without all Corporiety and Figure, intirely remote from the Conditions of a Body, which are no way consistent with Infinite Perfection. And therefore this should shew us the Folly of pretending to represent God by any Image; our Obliga-
tion

tion to elevate and refine our Notions, all we can of him; To Worship him with our Spirits; To beware of Spiritual no less than Fleshly Sins; To be particularly careful of our Spiritual Part, as of most worth, wherein we are like God; And to seek after and rest upon him, as our only suitable and satisfactory Enjoyment; Deriving our Comfort from his Word and Providence; Meeting him in his holy Ordinances; Trusting him in every Condition; Accounting his Favour our Life, and depending upon our Enjoyment of him to be our Eternal Happiness and Heaven.

Eternal.

Exod. 3. 14.

Lam. 5. 19.

Psal. 39. 5.

Prov. 23. 5.

Psal. 73. 26.

Immut' able.

2. As God, we also Believe him to be *Eternal*; according to the proper import of the Word, as excluding both Beginning and End. Which is what his name implies, by which he hath made known himself, and what his other Attributes and Perfections that admit no Limitation infer. And our being Actually Convinced of this, as it will fill us with Reverence towards his Majesty, whose *Throne is from Generation to Generation*; so with Horror at the Guilt of Sin, that opposing such an Eternal Being, exposes to an Eternal Punishment, *from the Presence of this God, who ever lives to inflict it.* With whom our Past Sins are always Present, and cannot be forgot. *At whose Right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.* Before whom our Age is as nothing and all the tempting Enjoyments of the World, as *Things that are not*; nor deserving an Heart to be set upon them, because our Portion for ever can only be God who remaineth for ever.

3. We must Believe in God as he is *Immutable*. Not subject to any Change with respect either to his *Essence*, being an Incorruptible Spirit; In respect to his *Knowledge* being Omniscient; In respect to *Duration*, being

being Eternal; in regard to *Place*, being Omnipresent; but especially in regard to his Will and Purpose wherein *is no variableness neither shadow of turning*. All change being in the Creature but never in the Creator; to which his Perfection is an invincible Bar. A Change for the Better, arguing him not Perfect before; and for the Worse, making him cease to be Perfect afterwards. There-
Jam. 1. 17.

fore he saith of himself, *I am the Lord and Change not*. And false Balaam argued truly of him, *God is not a Man that he should lie, neither the Son of Man that he should Repent: Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it Good?*
Mal. 3. 6.
Num. 23. 19.

And therefore the expression of *God's Repenting* (so often met with in the Scripture) of some Good promised, or Evil threatened, or Work he hath wrought
The meaning of God's Repenting.

must also be understood after the manner of Men, and as spoken by way of Condescension and Accommodation to our Weakness and Capacity; without casting any Imputation of Mutability and Inconstancy upon God; since all Change in him, is only of his outward Conduct, according to his Infal-
 lible Foresight and Immutable Will. For he is now, what he ever was, and ever will be. The same implacable Enemy to Sin, and Terror to all Impenitent Sinners. The same faithful Friend to Virtue, and Consolation to Good Men to trust in and rely upon him; and the same Encouragement to all, to become such, in order to come up to the Divine Terms of Reconciliation, which it is impossible to alter. His Constancy to do us Good should excite us to Persevere to do him the best Service we can, and not suffer our selves to be driven from him by any ill Usage, or flatter'd from him by the Careless of the World; But

professing our selves his Children we should strive to imitate him in his Constancy and Holy Purposes, and continue faithful to the Death, till he shall give us a Crown of Life.

Rev. 2. 10.
Omnipotent.

4. To Believe in God is further to believe him to be Omnipotent, as he is the Original of all Power; there being none but what is derived from him; whom no Power can resist; and with whom all things are Possible to be done, the Doing whereof may argue Perfection, and which doth not imply a Contradiction either in the Things themselves, or to the Nature and Perfection of the Doer of them. A Limitation in which would be a Limitation in his Essence, since Weakness is an Imperfection in Nature, and a degree of not Being; And without which all his other Perfections would be insignificant. Of this we have most clear Manifestations in those his stupendious Works of Creation, Providence and Redemption; wherein whosoever will but Regard the Work of the Lord, and consider the Operations of his Hands, will acknowledge, with the Psalmist, that Power belongeth unto God; And will hence be induced to Dread, Obey, and Trust in him, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, &c.

Pf. 62. 11.
Eph. 3. 20.

Omnipresent.

5. To Believe in God is also to believe him to be Omnipresent with respect both to his efficacious Influence and Virtue, and his Essence. God is Virtually present, in the most Universal Sense, as he influences and governs all things by his Authority, his Power, his Knowledge and Providence; and in a more Peculiar and Special Manner, he is limited to Heaven, to Holy Assemblies, to Pious Hearts, to Particular Actions, and to all Mens Consciences, where more eminent Discoveries are made thereof, so as seemingly to limit his Presence thereto.

But

But God is *Essentially present* in the most Universal and Unlimited Sense, in *every Place*, with all *Crea- Jer 23 24- tures*, and even *beyond every Thing and Place in the* *Psa. 139. 7.* *World*; yet without *Mixture*, without *Division*, *Job. 11. 8,* without *Multiplication*, and without even, *Extension* *9.* or *Diffusion*. These Distinctions, being understood and remembred, prevent all Mistakes or Objections concerning this Attribute; which God's Perfection infers and his Works declare. Our Belief whereof directly intends to establish us in right Apprehensions of God and of our selves; and also to prompt us to our Duty in our Behaviour towards others; To Restrain from all manner of Sin; And to Constrain us to the Practice of Holy Duties, of *all Kinds*, viz. to Reverence his Imensity and Greatness, to Praise his Majesty, to Joy in his Presence, to Pray to him, to Trust in him, to be Devout in his Service, to be Sincere and Upright in our Lives, and always to be Circumspect of our selves and ways before him. At *all Times*, viz. In Tribulation to be Patient, in Prosperity to be Humble, and in Temptations to be Resolute. And in *all Places*, viz. To be Honest in our Dealings, Sober in all Company, to make every Place mind us of God, and make us what we should be both in Publick and Private, before him who always sees what we are, and especially is Present with us in his own House and our Closets.

6. To believe in God, is to Believe him Omniscient. Omniscient. Whose Knowledge extends most Universally to every thing, neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened Heb. 4 13 unto the Eyes of him, with whom we have to do. He alone knows himself, dwelling in the Light, which no 1 Tim. 6. Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath seen 16.

nor can see. He knows every *Particular Creature*; every *Action*, and every *Thought* of them; He knows all *Things Past* and that have ceased to be; all *Things Future* and that are not yet, tho' never so *Casual* or *Fortuitous*. This his *Knowledge* is *Clear* and *distinct*, *Full* and *Perfect*, *Immediate*, *Intuitive* and *Comprehensive*, and is the *Fountain* of all *Knowledge*, both what he *Possesseth* himself, and communicates to others, and there is nothing that doth more *Eclipse* the *Divine Nature* than the want of it. The *Consideration* of this, will clear to us our *Belief* of a *Providence*, of the *Resurrection* of the *Body*, and of a *General Judgment* according to the *Deeds* of men done in this *Life*. It will *Command Veneration*; *Teach Humility*; *Excite* to the *Duties* of *Trust* and *Patience* in *secret Troubles*, to *Examination* of, and *Repentance* for, *past Miscarriages*, to *Uprightness* in all our *Dealings*, and *Sincere Devotion* in *secret Prayer*; And will prove a great *Preservative against all Sin* in general, but more *Particularly* against the *Sins of Thoughts*, of the *Works of Darknes* and *Secrecy*, of *Little Sins*, which no *Body* is apt to *Regard* or *Think* the *Worse* of us for, all *Hypocrisy* and *Pride of Knowledge*.

Wise.

7. To *Believe in God*, is to *Believe him also Wise*. Which tho' depending on and implied in his *Knowledge*, yet is conceivable as *Distinct* therefrom inasmuch as what *Knowledge* considers *Absolutely* and in it self, implying a bare *Understanding* of *Things*, *Wisdom* considers *Relatively*, under the *Notion* of *Means* and *End*, and implies the *Skill* of *ordering* and *disposing* of them aright. And which, though to be found in some *Creatures* (as being one of those *Attributes* that are *communicable*) yet is *God* said to be the *only Wise God*; as being

being so Originally and Independently, as also Eminently and Transcendently. The greatest Wisdom of the Creatures is nothing either in Opposition or Comparison to the Wisdom of God which is Perfect and Infallible. And this as his Nature implies, (since Folly is both a Defect and Disgrace) to his Works, whether of Creation, Providence or Redemption, do abundantly illustrate, by shewing us his fitness to Govern and Judge the World; the Ground of his wonderful Patience towards Sinners; and the Security and Happiness of all under his Direction. Instructing us whither to repair for Advice in all our Straits and Difficulties; and whom to Trust, and Imitate, and Obey, and ascribe all Praise and Glory to; even to the only Wise God, to whom be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

8. *We Believe in God as he is perfectly True.* Im-True. implying both his Veracity in every Declaration of his Mind, in opposition to Falshood and Hypocrisy; and his Faithfulness in his Promises, in opposition to Injustice. The Divine Nature is All-sufficient, having no Temptation to be otherwise than Good and Just, *Yea saith St. Paul, let God be true and every Man a Liar.* It is therefore very reasonable that we should Believe and Assent to whatever we are satisfied is revealed to us by God; as being assured that he doth not deceive us; and that unless it be our own Fault, we need not be deceived in things that are necessary to our Happiness. Herein is a firm Foundation for our Hope and Trust, upon our care to perform the Condition; and is Matter of great Terror and Despair to such as obstinately neglect it. And this is the Pattern also we should all Copy after, in performance of our Oaths, and Vows and Covenants towards God, and our Words and Promises towards Men, as we profess our selves

Rom. 3. 4

to be the Children of the God of Truth, and have Renounced the *Father of Lies*.

Holy.

9. *We Believe, again, in God, as the most Pure and Holy Being.* Even Essentially, Infinitely and Perfectly so; One that can neither Do, nor Approve of any Wickedness, and cannot but Love Virtue where-ever he finds it. The very notion of God includes an everlasting Separation and Distance from moral Imperfection in it; as inconsistent with all his other Attributes; And than which no other is oftener made mention of in the Scripture. This may convince us of the *Intrinsic Good and Evil*, in Things; and rectify our *Judgment and Esteem* of Persons and Things; and may Recommend *Holiness* to our *Imitation and Practice*, as the highest Excellency and Perfection, and an Essential and Principal Ingredient of Happiness. It may likewise Thunder Terror against all Unholy and Wicked Persons; and Induce us to, and Direct us in our *Addresses to God by Prayer*, admonishing us never to Approach him without Reverence, nor upon any wicked unwarrantable Errand; and always to make Holiness the chief of our Request; that *as he which hath called us is Holy, so we may be Holy in all manner of Conversation.*

1 Pet. 1. 15,

Just.

10. *We further Believe in God as perfectly Just* in his Equal and Impartial Distribution of Rewards and Punishments. Which if not always sufficiently manifested in this Life, which is a Time of Tryal and Forbearance, will be sure to be Cleared and Perfected in the next Life at the *Day of the Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God*. Till then we ought to suspend our Censure and Doubts; and with the Prophet lay this down as a Firm Principle, that however *past finding out* God's Judgments are at present, yet he is *just in all that is brought upon*

Rom 2. 5.

Neh 9. 33.

upon us. Hereupon then the Impenitent hath Reason to ground his *Terror*, and the Righteous his *Comfort*, and All their *Imitation* of this Divine Righteousness, in *giving to all their due*; To God, Love, Reverence and Obedience; and to Men, in all our Dealings, what is Just and Right: *Being Righteous, as he is* 1 Jo. 3. 7. *Righteous.*

11. To conclude, and to Crown the Divine Per- *Good*fection, *We Believe in God as infinitely Good*; which in a large and unlimited Sense is used to signify his Essence who is *וְיֵהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* *The Good*, and Comprehends most of his other Attributes, as several Streams flowing from this one Fountain. But in a more strict and peculiar Sense, as a distinct Perfection, it always imports his Benignity or Bounty; which is his Readiness to do all befitting Good, and his Disposition never to do any unjust or unnecessary Harm. And of this the Notion and Evidence is so very Clear and Certain to all, that most are but too apt to presume too far upon it, and none but are or have been the Living Monuments of it. And therefore as the Consideration of this should Caution us, that we Abuse not this Divine Perfection by gross *Mistakes* and dangerous *Presumption*; So ought it to Engage and Excite us to Duty by way of Gratitude and Interest, to *Adore*, and *Reverence*, and *Obey*, and *Trust*, and *Hope* in, and *Submit* to, and *Contemplate*, and *Imitate* the Divine Nature herein.

According to these Notions, and these Effects, ought we to conceive of the God we profess to *Believe in*, that it may be the True God, and not a meer Fiction of a deluded Fancy that we make the Object of our Faith. Representing him to our Minds, first by the most Natural and Plain, and Easy of these Perfections, such as his *Justice*, *Power*, *Truth*,

Truth and Goodness, which all Men are able to Conceive of and understand, and by them to govern our Reasoning about him. And then always Considering them in Conjunction, so as to reconcile them with one another. The greatest Mistakes in Religion having been observed to proceed from a separating the Perfections of God, and considering them singly, and framing such wide and large Notions of one, as to exclude another, in the Unity whereof the Divine Essence consists. Which is the next remaining Argument of this Discourse which respects the *Godhead*, as the Object of our Belief in general; and will engage us according to our Method,

III. To consider the *Unity of God*; as being obliged, Both in our *Text and Creed*, to believe him to be but *One*, as he is there mentioned, yet (as shall be shewn) necessarily distinguished into three several Persons of *Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, which divide the *Articles of our Creed* among them.

But this shall be referr'd to the next Discourse. Concluding this with,

Glory to the same ever Blessed Trinity in Unity, to be solemnly ascribed by us and all the World World with him End. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

ON THE

First Article

OF THE

APOSTLES CREED.

Eph. iv. 6.

One God and Father of all,-----

THE *Existence and Essence* of the Deity as the Object of our Belief, having been the Argument of our Last Discourse; The Divine *Unity*, as implying a *Trinity*, being the *Third* and only remaining Respect, wherein we are in our *Creed* obliged to *Believe in God*, is what now falls under the Consideration of this Discourse. Of this the *Text* is an express Testimony, Asserting *God the Father*, in this First Article of our *Creed*, to be but *One God and Father of all*. Wherein are contained these Two Propositions; viz. 1. That there is but *One God*. And, 2. That that this one God is the *Father of all*.

1. That

ity of
ed.

I. *That there is but One God.* Which tho it hath ever been concluded to have been sufficiently signified in this Article of our Creed, by the singular Number, wherein God is mentioned; yet is this Positively express'd in the *Text*, which other Ancient Creeds have herein followed, as a main Point of our Belief, distinguishing us from *Pagans* and *Idolaters*. Who, distributing the Divine Honour among a Multitude of Deities, of their own invention and and the Devils Suggestion, greatly wronged God, and provokingly exposed themselves.

For *Unity* is Essential to the Deity. Plurality implies Diversity, which the Divine *Simplicity* cannot admit, proceeding from the fruitfulness of Causes which is no way competible to an *Independent* Being that is of it self and dependeth on no Cause whatsoever. Besides, also, if there be more God's, there must be more *Infinities* of the same Kind, which implies a Contradiction, because one Infinite Being comprehendeth all *Perfection*, not only as considered in a General Notion, but Actually; so that there can be none for any other Deity to be invested with or possessed of in the same manner. And of this, even those Heathens, who were most infamous for their Multiplicity of Gods, were Convincers of themselves; unanimously Asserting *One* only Supreme God, under whom they supposed several subordinate Deities, as Deputies, presiding over several Parts of the Universe. They were drawn into this absurdity (as hath been generally conceived) from a Desire Men had to express their Gratitude, by honouring the Memories of their Benefactors, in those first and ruder Ages of the World. To this the *Apostle* is thought to allude, where he saith,

W^e

We know there is no other God but one; for tho there be that are Called Gods, both in Heaven and in Earth 1 Cor. 8. 4.

(as there be Gods many, and Lords many): But to us there is but one God, &c. And the more Learned

and Wise any of them were, the more clearly and fully were they perswaded of this Truth;

Which *Plato, Aristotle, Hierocles*, and others, confess in their Writings; and for which *Socrates*

is generally reputed to have suffered *Martyrdom*.

It was, sure, a Devilish Notion of Gratitude

that tempted Men so to Dishonour God, as to

Ungod him to make room to Deify a Creature!

For he that hath declared himself to be the *First*

and *Last*, as our *one God* hath, neither can have, *Isa. 48. 12.*

nor needs, nor is there any other God besides him. — 44. 6.

There can be no More or Other God, no more

than there can be two Prime and Ultimate Cau-

ses; for all Things to depend on *One*, and that

there should be *More Independent Beings* is a

Contradiction. There *Needeth* to be no more or

other God, no more than an Infinite Being can be

Insufficient and Limited; or than Superfluity,

which Nature rejects, be imagined to disgrace and

destroy the God of Nature. Neither, in fine, *is there*

any more or other God, no more than that Unity,

Order, Peace and Harmony, apparent in the Con-

stitution and Conservation of the Things in this

World, conspiring to one End, and continuing in

one uniform Course, do afford a reasonable occasion

for Jealousy to suspect Diversity of Conduct. So

that the same Arguments that prove the *Existence*,

and illustrate and inform us of the *Essence*, tend to

convince us also of the *Unity of God*; Obliging

us to *believe all*, who *Assent* to one; and by our

saying, *I believe in God*, necessitating us to mean

that we believe *That there is a God*, that he is

the

the True God, and that there is but One such. The Result of this is, to direct us to make God the only Object of our Devotion; and to caution us of sharing away any of his Honour from him, either by admitting another God into his *Share*, or into *Copartnership* with him. Remembring that as he is to have a Place, so is nothing else to be placed with him in our Religious Services: As neither *Sun* nor *Moon*, nor *Stars*, nor *Stones*, nor *Beasts*, nor *Demons*, with *Pagans*; So nor *Angels*, nor *Saints*, nor *Sacrament*, nor *Relict*, with the
 1 Cor. 8.6. *Papists*; There being to us but one God the Father, who hath Right to our Worship, whose Service
 1 Jo. 17. 3. is both our Duty and Interest, and whom to know as the only True God is Life Eternal. We are taught further,

The Paternity of God.

II. That this One God is the Father. Implying, either that God, essentially considered (to which Notion we have hitherto supposed that the Name of God might in our Creed, be applyed) is the Father; Or that God by way of Eminency is the Father with respect to Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, in whom we profess our Belief in the succeeding Article. In both which distinct Respects the Analogy of our Faith warrants us to believe him such; and wherein accordingly, in this his Title, we must consider him.

1. God is then Essentially Considered, as the One only true God, the Father also. This Title, in many respects, truly and properly belongs to him.
 1. By right of Creation; which is a kind of Generation; and on which account he is called the Father of Spirits; and Angels are called his Sons, and Man his Offspring.
 2. By right of Conservation, which is a Paternal Act; on which account Job reckon'd him-
 Heb. 12.9.
 Job 38. 7.
 Act. 17. 28.

himself to be a *Father to the Poor and Fatherless.* Job 29. 16.
 3. By *Virtue of Education and Governance*, extended towards all Men, and more peculiarly evidenced towards *Good Men.* He *Governs and Educates all Men as their Father*, by wholesome *Instructions* offered in his *Word and Providence*; by necessary and seasonable *Corrections*; by *Compassionating the Miserable*; and *Presiding over all in Dignity and Age*, with *Goodness and Affection*; being *Father*, as he is *Prince of the Universe*, (on which account *Kings* are termed *Fathers of their Country*;) as the *Prime Original* of our *Stock* (as we read of *Fathers of Tribes*;) and as *Before and Above all stiled the Ancient of Days*, and eminently *The Father* for his standing.

More peculiarly he *Governs and Educates Good Men as their Father.* These he hath *Redeemed and Delivered* from a State of *Misery* unto an happy Condition, which is a kind of *Generation.* For is not he thy *Father that hath Bought thee?* says *Moses*, to the *Israelites*, upon the account of their *Temporal Deliverance from Egypt.* Yea them he hath *Regenerated*, and as the *Father of Lights*, of his own *Will*, began with the *Word of Truth.* And them he will restore by a *Glorious Resurrection* to another more excellent State of *Being*, after this, more like and conformable to himself; who therefore are called the *Children of God*, being the *Children of the Resurrection.* Then he hath *Adopted and received as Sons* into his *Family*; giving them *Power*, or *Privilege*, to become the *Sons of God.* For them he hath provided an *Inheritance as Heirs of God*; knowing that of the *Lord* we shall receive the *Reward of the Inheritance.* And them he hath dignified with a *Fraternal Relation* to his own *Son*; whom *God sent forth, made of a Woman*, that we might receive

Deut. 32. 6.

Jo. 5. 1.

Lu. 20. 36.

Jo. 1. 12.

Rom. 8. 17.

Col. 3. 24.

Gal. 4. 4. 5.

receive the Adoption and Priviledge of being made Sons.

And the Consideration of this Relation of God to us, tends to inform and admonish us concerning many necessary Duties resulting thence; and to enforce upon us the Practice of them. 1. In General, it may, and should put us in mind of the Reverence and Honour due to him from us, as from Children to their Father, and that on the most Obliging Account. *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master, If I then* (says God himself by the Prophet *Malachi*) *be a Father where is my Honour?* 2. It should, more particularly, cherish Faith, raise our Hope, and quicken our Devotions, so as to address our selves to him with Dispositions of Heart becoming Children; who have no where such a Father, as *our Father which is in Heaven*. We should make him *Acquainted* with all our Wants. Come to him for *Advice* in all our Streights. Trust him with all our Concerns. Readily Obey all his Commands, being Pleased and Content with all and any of his allotments. We should bear his Chastisements with *Patience*. Receive his Encouragements with *Thankfulness*. Render him the utmost of our *Love*. Behave our selves orderly and kindly towards all his Children, as Fellow-Creatures or Brethren with us, in respect to him our Common Father. And in all his Imitable Perfections strive to Resemble him; being followers, [or Imitators] of God as dear Children. Finally, 3. This Consideration, in order hereto, should raise in us a due Valuation of our selves; That we may do nothing Ignoble but every thing worthy of such an eminent and high Relation: shewing our selves either so Generous as to answer the Credit of our Ex- traction, or so Honest as to renounce our Kindred.

And

And without such Filial Effects on our Lives this part of our *Creed* will be of no Use; neither will our Confession to *Believe in God as the Father*, be taken for any part of our Faith, while we treat him as our Enemy, and shew our selves as Rebels to him.

2. But God also, I told you, considered by way of Eminency, with respect to the relative Apposition annexed, is more peculiarly the Father Referring to our Lord Jesus Christ, expressly in the following Article of our *Creed* called his Son, as joyned in the same Divine Nature. This Directs us to believe in God, as the Father, in that Notion according to which Christ is his only Son; which is to believe in him, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the principal Intention of the Words. This appears evident from the following Article, obliging us to believe in Jesus Christ, as his only Son, as well as from the most Ancient Expositions hereof, which interpret it no otherwise; And especially from the Form of Confession, prescribed by our Saviour to be used in Baptism, in the Name of the Father, Mat. 28. 19 and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This Form is conceived to be the Rise and Original of our *Creed*, and according to it the Title of Father ought therefore to be here interpreted. This is the Doctrine of the Gospel, attested by God in a Voice from Heaven; professed by our Saviour; preached by the Apostles; confirmed by Miracles; and wherein God manifested his transcendent Love to Mankind, in giving his only Begotten Son for us. Begotten by him in a Peculiar Manner, wherein no other ever was, not only by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; Even by designation Luk. 1. 35. of him to Sovereign Power and Authority, By raising Heb. 1. 2. him from Death to Life, (upon which accounts Acts 13. also 32. 33.

also the *Scripture* appropriates *Filiation* to *Christ*, which implies God's *Paternity*; but in a more eminent and peculiar manner, by an *Eternal Generation* in the beginning, before all Time imaginable or possible, in an unconceivable Way, communicating his own Divine Essence to him, not only specifically but individually. And hereby, as the *Scriptures* speak, he not only was in the Form of God, but to such a Degree, as not to think it any robbery to be equal with him. And the same Communication of the Divine Nature, tho' not in the same manner, having been also made by him to the Holy Ghost; therefore (as we are taught in the Creed of St. Athanasius, which is an Explication hereof) the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither Confounding the Persons, nor Dividing the Substance; Maintaining both, Union and Distinction among them.

The Trinitarian Creed.

Athanasian Creed.

The Union is whereby these Three Persons are not one simply, but one in Nature, even Coessential or Consubstantial; having all one Godhead. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God: And yet they are not Three Gods but One God; there being but One only God in Nature. And therefore as these Three Persons are but one Nature, so whatsoever agrees to God, simply consider'd, agrees to them all Three; Being all Coequal and Coeternal. Not only one with another, but also each in another. The Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost in them both. Not as tho' the Father had one Part of the God-Head, the Son another Part, and the Holy Ghost a Third (the most Simple and Infinite Godhead, not being subject to Composition or Division) but every Person being Whole God, subsisting

sisting not in a part, but in the whole God-head; and the whole intire God-head being communicated from the *Father* to the *Son* and from both *Father* and *Son* to the *Holy Ghost*.

The *Distinction* is whereby these *Three Persons*, having but one God-head, are yet *Three* and not *One* only.

And that is twofold, viz. By their several *Personal Properties*, in relation to each other; And their *Personal Operations* in respect to us.

Their *Personal Properties* distinguish them each from other, in respect to themselves. The *Father* being the *Father*, and not the *Son* or the *Holy Ghost*, and so of the rest. Not as if these were only *Three Names* of *One God*; For the *Three Persons* do not in Name or Word, but Really and in Truth distinctly subsist in the same Divine Nature. Neither as if they were *Three Forms* or *Differences* of one *God*, as if the *Father* alone is *God*, and that he is called a *Father* in one respect, the *Son* in another, and the *Holy Ghost* in a Third; For this is to make the *Personal Properties* to be meerly Imaginary Accidents: But the *Father* is so *God* as never to become the *Son*, the *Son* so *God* as never to become the *Father*, and the *Holy Ghost* so *God* as never to become either. The *Personal Property* of the *Father* being to beget the *Son* from all Eternity; That of the *Son* to be so begotten of the *Father*; and that of the *Holy Ghost* to proceed from both.

Or (as in the *Athanasian Creed* again) The *Father* is made of none; neither Created, nor Begotten. The *Son* is of the *Father* alone, nor Made nor Created, but Begotten. The *Holy Ghost* is of the *Father* and of the *Son*; neither Made, nor Created, nor Begotten, but

H

Proceed-

Proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers ; One Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Ghost not three Holy Ghosts. There is but one Person in the Trinity, which is from None ; and the very Generation of the Son, and Procession of the Holy Ghost undeniably prove, that neither of those Two can be that Person. Who therefore has a Priority, tho' not in Essence, where none is afore or after other ; none is greater or less than another ; yet in Order and by way of some Eminency, which the very Name of Father implies ; and, where ever the Rule of Faith is delivered, He is observed to be named First ; who alone hath the Divine Essence of himself ; and whom we call therefore the First in respect of him whom we term the Second Person in this Trinity. So that our Belief in God the Father doth imply our Belief, that he is the Father of Jesus Christ who is his only Son, and consequently that there is an Union and Distinction of Persons, even by their Personal Properties in the God-head, (determined clearly, in the Scripture to Three in number) whereof he is the First, and so a Belief of the Trinity is herein profess'd.

Which Doctrine however Incomprehensible, is never the less Credible : It being clearly the Revelation of God to us of himself, whose Nature is Incomprehensible ; and which could never otherwise have entred into the Mind of Man to conceive or have found there such an Universal Belief, as is given to it in the whole Church, and among so many different Nations. This adds to the Majestickness of our Religion ; Commands our Veneration ; Checks our self Confidence of our own Wit or Wisdom ; and we ought to study it, as according to our Capacities, so with humble Diligence.

The

The distinction of these Three Persons in one Divine Nature, is made more intelligible, and even practically Useful to us by their *Personal Operations*, being the things they do for, and towards us, according to that Order of working which the Scripture assigns to them. The Personal Operation of the *Father* being the work of *Creation*; that of the *Son*, *Redemption*; and that of the *Holy Ghost*, *Sanctification*. And according to this it is, that our *Creed* is summarily distinguish'd into three Parts, whence we are design'd chiefly to learn to believe in *God the Father, who hath made us and all the World.* 2. *In God the Son, who hath Redeemed us and all Mankind.* 3. *In God the Holy Ghost, who Sanctifieth us, and all the elect People of God.* This serving to illustrate the wonderful Grace of God in the Evangelical Dispensation, and thereby to beget in us suitable Affections, and to direct and order our Devotion towards him.

God grant we may all of us, therefore, thus Believe and thus Worship [*God the Father*] so as to endear our selves to this Blessed Trinity, as well by Conforming our Lives to its wholesom Commands, as by improving our Understandings in a right apprehension of its Existence. And may God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, evermore lead us into all Truth, and bring us at last to the Enjoyment of himself, in the Beatifick Vision, throughout all Eternity!

To which Blessed Trinity, be ascribed due Honour, Praise, Majesty, Power and Glory, from us and all the World, now and for ever. Amen.

SERMON V.
ON THE
First Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Rev. iv. 8.

Lord God Almighty, ---

AFTER the Consideration of God in his *Existence, Nature and Unity*, having been Taught to profess our Belief in him, as the *Father or First Person in the Blessed Trinity*, we are next instructed by our *Creed* what to believe concerning each Person distinctly therein. And first concerning *God the Father*, That he is *Almighty*. Which tho', as a *Divine Perfection*, it doth equally belong to each Person in the *God-head*; yet with relation to their *Personal Operations* it is rightly *Attributed*, by way of *Eminency* to *God the Father, who hath made us and all the World*: It being imply'd in and inseparable from his *Work of Creation*, wherein the

Holy

Holy Scriptures mention him as the Principal Agent, who Created the World by the Son, and by his Spirit Garnished the Heavens. Heb. 1. 2. Job 26. 13.

The Word *Almighty* [*παντοκρατωρ* in the Original] is usually distinguished to signify both the Operative Power of God, whereby he can do all things consistent with his Glory, as he himself pleaseth; and also the Authoritative Power of God, whereby he doth Rule and Govern whatsoever he hath made. Seeing then, this Latter Notion of the word hath Relation to and Dependance on the Work of Creation (God's actual Dominion being no otherwise necessary than upon Supposition of a preceding Act of Creation) which is the Personal Operation by which the Father is distinguished; and seeing, also, that former Notion of the Word hath already had its particular Consideration among the Attributes of God Essentially considered; therefore may the *Almightiness* of the Father here be properly acknowledg'd, with relation to this Title, as consisting in his Sovereignty over the Works of his Creation, resulting from the Effects of that Goodness, and Power, and Wisdom, whereby all things are and were made; which is Universally acknowledg'd even by Heathens, and abundantly asserted in the *Holy Scriptures*. Now this Implies, 1. His Empire, as Ruler over the World, and, 2. His Dominion, as Proprietor of all things therein.

1. *God's Empire, as Ruler over the World*, constitutes him the Supreme Governour and Original of all Royalty, by whom Kings Reign, whose Ministers they are; whose Kingdom rulerth over all; the only Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; from whom all Power is derived, to whom it is

Empire.
Prov. 8. 15.
Rom. 13.
4.
Ps. 103. 19.
1 Tim. 6.
15.

accountable, and beyond whom there is no Appeal. And this his *Empire* he exerciseth, both by his *Legislative* and *Providential* Authority.

God's Legislative Power.

1. *The Legislative Authority of God* consisteth in his *Paternal Almightyness* to Command his own Creatures; to *Dispense* with his own Commands; and to *Bind* to the Observation thereof by Rewards and Punishments, according to his own Will and Pleasure.

1. *God is Almighty to Command* his own Creatures; whose *Sovereign Will* is therefore called
 Jam. 2. 8. by St. James the *Royal Law*: It being the first and clearest manifestation of *Sovereignty*. And there-
 If. 33. 12. fore the *Lord* who is our *King*, is also said to be our *Laws-giver*. In Him the sole Power of making Laws doth Originally reside, whereby the whole World is Govern'd; whereto even they that Govern therein are Subjected; by which the Authority of all other Laws are to be measured; and which it self is only limited by the *Capacity* of them whom it Commands, and by the *Nature* of him who enjoineth those Laws. For God hath
 1 Jo. 5. 3. Commanded nothing *Impossible*, and nothing *Evil*; his *Commandments*, through the Assistances of his Grace, are not *grievous*; but according to the Perfection of his own Nature, *Holy, Just, and Good*.
 Rom. 7. Who tho' he can Command what he will, yet cannot Will any thing, but what is of *Essential* and *Eternal* Goodness and Obligation. This therefore, as it extolleth the *Almighty*ness of our Heavenly *Father*, so it urgeth our sincere and intire *Obedience* to him.

2. *The Almightyness of God's Legislative Authority* is also manifested in *Dispensing with his own Commands*, which none other could dispense with, being in respect to all *Humane Opposition*
 sure;

sure; standing fast for ever and ever, being done in Psal. 111.
Truth and Uprightness; which yet God hath an im- 7, 8.
 mediate Power and Influence over, so as to Can-
 cel Old Laws, and impose New ones as he pleas-
 eth. Whereby he hath sometimes interrupted Na-
 ture in her stated Course by the Arrest of Mira-
 cles; and made his Creatures exceed or fall short
 of their Bounds Ordained for them. Some *Posi-*
tive Laws he hath revers'd; having chang'd the
Law of Works into that of *Grace*, in reference to
 all Mankind; and having abrogated the *Ceremoni-*
al and Judicial Law, with respect to the *Jews*; yea,
 even his *Moral Law*, which is grounded on Eter-
 nal Reason, God hath, by his *Sovereignty*, relaxed
 to particular Persons, upon occasion, for a time
 and in a Measure; as is evident in his Command-
 ing *Abraham* to Kill his Son, the *Israelites* to Rob
 the *Egyptians*, and permitting Polygamy and Di-
 vorcement among his own People; the Law still
 remaining in Force and Power to other Persons,
 and in other Cases. And, therefore, tho' it be
 hard to tell how far such Dispensation can reach,
 and to what Particulars it can extend, because
 God's *ways are past our finding out*, and his Sove- Rom. 11.
 reign Power is not to be understood by us; yet 33.
 since our Saviour hath obtain'd to himself an E-
 verlasting Kingdom, whose Laws must last as
 long as the World lasts, and whereby God will
 Govern Mankind for ever; we may be sure God
 will never dispense with these Laws, they having
 an Eternal Reason in their Nature, and implying
 essential Duties which Creatures owe to their
 Creator, no more to be chang'd than God's own
 Nature is. To these therefore we must resolve
 ever to be Subject, and expect to stand or fall by
 without remittance; and ought to reject any Do-

Erine; tho' an Angel from Heaven, or any Prophet, or *Dreamer of Dreams*, any Teacher and pretendedly illuminated Person should Teach or persuade to it, if inconsistent therewith. So that tho' God can dispense with what Laws he will, and hath dispens'd with some, which otherwise could never have been disobeyed without Sin; yet can he never be willing to Dispense with others, because he is *Almighty*, and always acts according to the Rectitude of his own Nature, and the Eternal Purposes of his Holy Will.

3. God's *Almightiness* to Bind the Observation of his Laws upon us, is manifested in Rewards and Punishments; executed according to his Will and Pleasure, in Kind and Proportion, in Righteousness and Wisdom, he being manifested to be the Lord of the World, by the Judgments which he executeth, begun in this Life, but compleated in the next; Inflicted upon Collective Bodies, and upon single Persons; Spiritual and Temporal; in Pain and Loss; in respect of Goods, Body and Soul; in a more Ordinary and Extraordinary manner; immediately by the Hand of God himself, and immediately by any of his Creatures, whether *Animate or Inanimate*, Rational or Irrational; *Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapour, stormy Winds* fulfilling his Word. Angels and Men, both Good and Bad, being all the Executioners of his Will and Instruments of his Justice; which none can Escape, none can Bribe, none can Overpower; but sooner or later, All shall be Judg'd according to what they shall have done. And whenever God doth Reward or Punish, Good Men shall have no reason to complain that their Reward was delay'd, nor Bad Men to glory in the long Forbearance of Justice towards them; the Greatness of their Retri-
butions

Psal. 9. 16.

Ps. 148. 8.

2 Cor. 5.
19.

butions recompencing for all Delays, and manifesting that Righteousness and Judgment are the habitation of God's Throne; so that a Man shall say, verily there is a Reward for the Righteous; Verily he is a God that judgeth in the Earth. Pl. 97. 2.
— 18. 11.

2. The Providential Authority of God consisteth in his Paternal Almightyness to Observe all Actions and Tryals, and to Dispose and Order all Causes and Events: Doing according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth; and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Dan. 4. 31.

1. He observeth all Actions and Tryals; whose Eyes run to and fro throughout the whole Earth; and are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good; neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his sight: But all things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do. He rightly understandeth every Man's Deserts, sees their Wants, knows their Desires, considers their Circumstances what is best for them, and how to mend them when at the worst. No Enemies designs against us can be too close or sudden for his Discovery; nor any of our Sins or Services too secret for his Notice; who will bring to light the hidden things of Darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the Heart. 2 Chr. 16.
9.
Prov. 15.
3.
Heb. 4. 13.

I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins, to give every Man according to his way, and according to the fruit of his doings. His, therefore, is not an empty Speculation of his Creatures. 1 Cor. 4. 5.
Jer. 17. 10.

2. He, also, Orders and Disposes all Causes and Events. He sitting at the Helm Steers the course of every Motion; commandeth and restraineth all Causes, whether Natural, Accidental, or Moral. He Governs the World by Nature, and Nature it self

is

is govern'd by him; the influences whereof he Guides, Exerts or Suspends, to serve the Wise

Pl. 135.6. Ends of his Providence: *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas and all deep places. Chance and Accidents, unexpected by and surprizing to us, are all foreseen and ordered by God; and are but the more sudden turns of his Providence, ordained to accomplish what his own Wisdom and Counsel had decreed, to disappoint the Wisdom of the Wise, and defeat the Power of the Mighty; Frustrating the Tokens of the Lyars, and making Diviners Mad; turning wise Men backward, and making their Knowledge foolish. The Lot, even the most casual thing in*

Il. 44. 25. *the World, is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. He Governs Chance, which Governs almost all things else, and which none but God can Govern. Yea, he also Governs Moral Causes and Free Agents in his Government of Men, by whom a great part of the World it self is Govern'd. As Instruments of his Providence he influences their Minds and disposes their Actions. The freest Agent is not free from the Power of God, nor ungovernable by his Maker. He that made the Mind free, hath Power to make it serve his own Purposes. And tho' God maketh no Man Good or Bad, Vertuous or Vicious by a perpetual and irresistible Force, so as to contradict the Nature of Vertue and Vice, which requires a Liberty of Choice; yet doth he by a secret and irresistible Influence turn Mens Hearts, and Chain up their Passions, and alter their Counsels, so as to make them Instrumental of the Good they never design'd nor had any Inclination to; and to restrain them from the Mischief they intended and*

Prov. 16. 33. *other-*

otherwise had done; and this he does in order to accomplish his own Wise Counsels either of Mercy or Judgment. Hence *the way of Man* is said Jer. 10. 23.
not to be in himself; it is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps. There are many Devices in a Man's Heart; nevertheless the Counsel of the Lord, that shall Prov. 19. 21.
stand. Divine Counsels are accomplish'd by Mens Devices; not only exciting Men to do Good, but directing and determining them where to do it. Chnsing out the Persons they shall do good to, and appointing what Good they shall do, and in what Measures and Proportions they shall do it. And not only setting bounds to the Lusts and Passions of Bad Men, but directing their Wickedness, where it's Mischief shall light, what hurt it shall do, and what wise and good End shall be thereby served. Making Bad Men the Ministers of his Love to Correct the Good, and Executioners of his Vengeance to Punish each other. Permitting none to do more hurt, than what he can turn to Good. So that if God be for us, we need not fear who is against us; He being the Prime Cause that Governs all other Causes. Yea, 'tis He, also Orders and Disposes of all Events, even every thing of Good or Evil which happens to private Men, or publick Societies in Church or State. He appoints who shall be benefitted by the Good he excites, and who shall suffer by the Evil he permits, according to the Deserts of Men and the Wise Ends of his Providence. Nothing is excluded his Governance; no Evil ever happening in the World without his Permission; no Good coming to pass without his Order and Concurrence; nothing whether Good or Evil affecting the most Minute of his Creatures, in the most trivial Instance, without the over-ruling Will of our Heavenly
Father,

Rather guiding and directing it to his own ends; with whom *the very Hairs*, [that numberless stringy Excrecence] of our Heads are all numbered, neither growing nor falling off, without his Immense Notice and Order. So that there is nothing so Great, but is under his Power. Nothing so Little but is within his Care. Nothing so Free, but followeth his Conduct. Nothing so Fortuitous, but answereth his Purpose. Nothing so Inconsiderable, but it is the Order of his Eternal Decree. Creatures Act, but 'tis God alone Ruleth. His Will is the Prime Spring of all Motion; every Event in the World being but the Execution of his Order. So that nothing happens through Wild Chance or Blind Necessity; but all things are Ordered, amidst Corruptions and Uncertainties, by wise foresight and an Harmonious Providence that doth all things well, and by whose Laws all things are Govern'd; which is his Empire over the World.

God's Dominion.

1 Cor. 8. 6.

Jer. 18. 6.

Rev. 4. 9.
10, 11.

II. *God's Dominion, as Proprietor of the World*, constitutes him the Lord and Owner of all things he Governs therein; who is the Almighty Father and Possessor of his own Creatures, of whom are all things, and we in [his] author, for him; even for his Pleasure, Use and Service, as the Apostle expresses it; according to what God had spoken by his Prophet *Jeremiah*, to the House of Israel; Behold, as the Clay is in the Potters hand, so are ye in mine hand. Which also the Four and Twenty Elders in the Revelations, gave the Glory of to him that sat on the Throne, saying, Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou hast Created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are, and were Created.

And

And in this *Dominion* God also exerciseth his *Almighty Sovereignty* in *Giving to*, and *Taking away* from his *Creatures*, according to his own *Pleasure*; some things by his *Prerogative* in an *Arbitrary* manner, and others by his *Will*, *Limited* according to *Promise*.

1. In the *Former Way*, God allots to Men their *Circumstances* in this *World*, as to their *Endowments*; Making great *Difference* in his *Dispensation* of *Health*, *Beauty* and *Parts*; giving these to some in *Abundance*, and to others in great *Deficiency*. As to *Enjoyments*, whether *Temporal*, filling some with, and emptying others of *Honour*, *Wealth*, and *Friends*; Or *Spiritual*, allotting some Men greater *Helps* and *Opportunities* for *Religion*; and more *Eminent degrees* of *Efficacious Grace*, and longer *Forbearance* of *Punishment* for their *Sins*, than he doth to others. Whereby the *Jews* became God's *Peculiar People* at first, and have since been *cast off*, and the *Gentiles* planted in their room; many of whom are now *Christians*, trained up in an *Orthodox Belief* and true *Worship*, having good *Examples* before them, and being under the care of *skilful Pastors*; While many others are *deprived* and *destitute* of some, or, perhaps, of all these; wherein yet God's *dealings* must be acknowledged to be always *Wise* and very *Reasonable*, (in whom there can be no *Unrighteousness*) and warranted by his *Prerogative*, owning no bounds but his own *Will*, and whereby he may have *Mercy* on whom he will have *Mercy*.

Rom. 9.
14, 18.

2. In the *Later way*, God alloteth to Men in this *Life* his *Dispensations* of *saving Grace*; and in the *reber Life*, of *Rewards* and *Punishments* in *Heaven* and *Hell*; wherein the *Arbitrariness* of His
Power

2 Cor. 5.
10.

Luke 11.

13.

Matt. 25.

29.

— 5. 8.

Power is no way concern'd, He being under Promise and Compact to dispense and measure them out to Men, according to their Readiness to comply with, and their care to seek and make use of his *Grace*, which is proffer'd to all in a sufficient measure who are not wanting to themselves. He will Judge all *according to what they shall upon a Legal Tryal, be found to have done in the Body, whether it be Good, or whether it be Bad.* So that we doing our serious Endeavour, as none need to fear that he shall suffer for want of any thing that was not in his own Power to help; so we neglecting or abusing the Means, and living an ill Life, no Man may presume that God may save him if he will at last. Because in the Dispensation of these things, he hath bounded the Sovereignty of his Will by Promises, to which he can no more be Unfaithful, than he can deny himself; and by which therefore, he hath left it to our own Choice and Power, to make our own Fortunes, who in case of Miscarriage shall have cause to blame no One but our selves. However *Arbitrarily*, therefore, God may dispense to Men their *Endowments and Enjoyments*, being under the Confinement of no Promise herein; yet *Grace and Salvation* he hath obliged himself to dispense *Legally*, having covenanted to give his *Grace to them that ask it*, and the increase thereof to them that improve by it, and to admit the *Pure in Heart to see God*; and in expecting any thing hereof from him, we must therefore have recourse not to any Arbitrary Power or fancied secret Decrees of God, but only to his Revealed Promises and Covenant Declarations; whereto as God will stand, so hereby must we stand or fall for ever. Which, surely, is a most comfortable

fortable Doctrine, agreeable to the Goodness of the Divine Nature, for Encouragement of Humane Endeavours, under a *Paternal*, not *Tyrannical* Government.

Such is the Nature of the *Sovereignty* of God the *Father Almighty*; exercising an *Empire* and *Dominion* over his *Creatures* most *Independent* and *Infinite*. *Independent* it is, both in its *Original*, being only in himself, who produced all things without any *Commander*, *Counsellor*, or *Helper*. And in its *Use*, he receiving no *Direction*, nor rendring any *Account* thereof to any *Other*. And it is, also, *Infinite* as to its *Extension* over all things; As to its *Intension* implying all *Power* over them; and as to its *Duration* enduring throughout all *Generations*. Behold, saith *Moses*, the *Heaven* Dent. 10. and the *Heaven of Heavens* is the *Lord's* thy *God*.¹⁴ And Behold saith *God* himself by *Jeremy*, as the *Jer. 18. 6.* *Clay* is in the *Potters* hand, so are ye in mine hand. — And saith the *Psalmist*, by way of humble acknowledgment to *God*, *Thy Kingdom* is an *Everlast-* Pf. 145. 13. *ing Kingdom*; whom *St. Paul* rightly stiles, *The* 1 Tim. 1. *King Eternal*.^{17.}

The natural Effect of our Belief hereof is to oblige us.

1. To be *duly sensible*, and *always mindful* that we are necessarily under the *Government* of *Almighty God*, and none are ever so much their own *Masters* here, as possibly to be allowed to do what they list, or to follow the *Devises* and *Desires* of their own *Hearts*, without *Controul*, or being *Accountable*, as in a *State of Anarchy* or *Lawless Condition*. There being one *Almighty Lord* over the *Universe*, in whose *Kingdom* we reside; to whose *Will* we are *Subject*; the *Laws* whereof we may not *Dispute*; the

the Proceedings whereof we cannot Resist or amend; to whom we are tied by the most indissoluble Bonds of Allegiance.

2. To own and acknowledge God for our Lord and Sovereign above all others to whom we are also
Prov. 3. 6. subject; in all our ways, in every State and Condition, in every Employment, in all Places, in all Companies, and at all Times, Regarding, Contemplating and Approving of his Government, as the Foundation of all other Duties of Religion; with-
Pf. 28. 5. out which Men naturally degenerate into workers of Iniquity, of whom the Psalmist complains, Because they regard not the Works of the Lord, nor the Operation of his hands.

3. To yield him the Duty and Service of his Subjects and Vassals; in humble Adorations of his Majesty, with all awful Reverence, Devout Worship, Intire Trust and most Universal Obedience.
Luke 6. 46.

4. To dread and beware of the great Evil of Sin, it appearing hence not only a matter of simple Folly or private Inconvenience, (contrary to our Reason) but an Act of high Rebellion, of Publick Mischief, against our Natural Allegiance, and the Peace and Order of the World.

5. To submit, in case of Offence and Disobedience, quietly and patiently, without murmuring, to whatever shall be inflicted upon us; as not happening to us through blind Necessity or fickle Chance, but ordered for us by Sovereign Right and Reason, that can do nothing Rashly or Unjustly. And Finally,
Pf. 39. 9.

6. To be always Exulting and Rejoycing, that we and all the World are under so Just and Gracious and Almighty a Government. It being well for the World, as well as for every particular Nation and Person therein

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therein, that the Lord reigneth, whose Empire and Dominion is the only security of their Order, or Peace, which Directs Governments, and Restrains Enemies on Earth; Insomuch that it may be said, That the worst of Times would be worse, were they not in God's Hands; and that none can be really bad that are of his Ordering.

Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only Wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SER.

SERMON VI.
ON THE
First Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Gen. i. 1.

*In the beginning God Created the Heaven and
the Earth.*

THE Almighty Sovereignty of God the Father, which was the Subject of our Last, being founded wholly on his Creation, (since he only that made the World can be supposed capable to govern it; and) which is now to be the Subject of this Discourse; therefore it is necessary that we, having acknowledged *That*, should immediately profess our Belief of *This*; which is now rightly made a Part therewith of this *First Article* in our Creed, concluding with this Great Truth, wherewith our Bible is begun in the Words of the *Text*, and which includes these four Parts; the Consideration
whereof

whereof will afford a full Explanation of this part of the Article. 1. The *Subject Matter* here spoken of, which is *the Heaven and the Earth*. 2. The *Act* relating thereto; and that is *Created*. 3. The *Agent*, who is *God*. And, 4. The *Time* when this *Act* was executed by this *Agent* on this *Subject*; and that was *In the beginning*.

I. *The Subject Matter* here spoken of in the *Text* *The World* and *Article* is *the Heaven and the Earth*; signifying, according to the *Hebrew* Circumlocution, for want of one Word, the *World*, express'd by its Principal Parts, *the Heaven and the Earth*, comprehending all Beings therein and belonging thereto; together with all their Parts, Furniture, and Inhabitants, whether Material and Visible, or Immaterial and Invisible. *For by him were all things Created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were Created by him, and for him. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Even the whole *World*, with every thing imaginable in it, (God only himself excepted) was the *Subject Matter* upon which the *Act* of *Creation* pass'd. Which is, Col. 1. 16.

II. *That Act*, express'd in the *Text* and imply'd in the *Article*; and whereby we are taught to believe that the *World* is a *Creature*, and that it became so by a proper *Act* of *Creation*. Jo. 1. 3.

1. *That the World is a Creature*, we believe in *Not God*, Opposition to that Atheistical Notion, allowing no other God but Nature, fancying that there is nothing existing but within the *World*, and that every thing there is but some Particle of that one and the

the same immensity; making God to be every thing, and every thing a God. But this consists no more with *Sense*, than it doth with *Religion*. It destroys all Liberty of Will, and Perfection of the Deity. Is attended with both Blasphemous and Ridiculous Consequences. And which therefore, is justly rejected by our Profession to believe that God is the *Maker of Heaven and Earth*; since whatsoever is made is necessarily a *Creature*; especially seeing also,

Created.

2. The World was made by an *Act of Creation*, which is wont to be considered here, with reference to its *Object*, the *Agent*, and *Space* of its performance.

1. With reference to its *Object* or *Effect*: Creation is the Production of a Total Being; so that whatever Entity a thing hath when made, it had no real Existence before it was so made. And this is commonly distinguish'd into that which is *Proper*, and that which is *Improper*. A *Proper Creation* is a Production of something out of Nothing. Which however impossible to Natural Agents, yet, implying no Contradiction in it self, is feasible by Omnipotence. And after this manner was made the *Chaos* or *First Matter*, all immaterial Substances and Simple or Elemental Bodies. An *Improper Creation* is, when any thing is produced out of some pre-existing Matter, yet indisposed for such a particular Form. For such an Indisposition, as to Form, renders it the same as no Matter, and makes its assumption thereof a *Creation*; yet an *Improper* one, because not without a *Medium* thereto. And after this manner were produced at first the several Species of Corporeal Beings, Furnishing and Adorning the World in so great

great Variety and Harmony, by no less stupendous and Miraculous a Virtue.

2. *With reference to the Agent, Creation is the Effect of infinite Goodness, Freedom and Power.* To which God was moved only by his own Essential *Benignity and Munificence*, Diffusive and Communicative of its self, bestowing so much of Being, Beauty, Delight and Comfort on his Creatures, whereby *the Earth is full of the Goodness of the Lord.* *Ps. 33. 5.* Which he did out of *Wise and Free Choice*, when the Act might have been forborn, or the Work have been otherwise Form'd; there being no Superiour Cause to guide, or Fatal necessity to constrain him, *for whose Pleasure all things are and were Created.* *And Rev. 4. 11.* this he by the *Determination of his own Will and Power* of his Almighty Word; without any Laborious Care or Toyl, without the helps of any Engines, or Induction of any Preparatory Dispositions; to Will and to Perform, being the same thing with God. *Ps. 33. 9.* *He spake, and it was done. He commanded, and they were Created.* *And this again,* *148. 5.*

3. *With reference to the space of its Performance,* this Act of Creation was perform'd in six days; even in a Short, yet wise and Orderly Procedure. By such Leisure giving us Liberty more easily and distinctly to contemplate the Wonders of God's Work, and teaching us hereby Deliberation and Order in all our own Works. And by such Dispatch manifesting his Power, for the encouragement of our industry; and providing a lasting Monument of his Goodness, for the security of Religion; not deferring the appointment of a *Day of Rest*, any longer than the Seventh, which God *Blessed and Sanctified* for his Creatures. *Gen. 2. 2. 3.*

III. The Agent hereof, affirm'd in the Text, and
13 pro-

fess'd to be believ'd so in our *Creed*, is *God*; who in the beginning Created the Heaven and the Earth, and whom therefore we believe to be the *Father Almighty, Maker* thereof. What the *Text* ascribes to *God* in general, our *Creed* appropriates to *God the Father* in particular; who (as also our *Catechism* hath taught us to say) *Made me and all the World*.

1. That the *World* was made by *God*, being Matter of Fact, we have it attested by the most *Infallible Declaration of God himself*, who was the only Witness present thereat; and which can be no more question'd than his Being. To him this great Work is very frequently and plainly ascribed in the *Holy Scriptures*. Whereto an *Universal Tradition* among all Nations and People in all Ages of the World doth accord. And *Natural Reason*, from considering the Nature of *Causes*, (Necessity implying a First Cause of all things;) and by Contemplating the *Frame and Beauty of this Visible World*, considered in its Parts either singly, or in Relation to each other, or in Connexion corresponding all together, convincingly inferreth the same Truth. So that none can reasonably deny or doubt but that the *Heavens declare the Glory of God*, and the *Firmament sheweth his handy work*,
 Pf. 19. 1. Ask therefore, now the *Beasts* and they shall teach thee, and the *Fowls of the Air*, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the *Earth*, and it shall teach thee; and the *Fishes of the Sea* shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these, that the *Hand of the Lord* hath wrought this? And yet have there been some so prophanely stupid or prejudic'd, who would not know nor learn this; but have pretended to Believe and presum'd to Teach, most unreasonably and ridiculously, that all this, looking so like the
 Job 12. 7. Work

Work of infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness, ^{Not by} was only the Effect of Blind and Impotent ^{Chance} *Chance*, ^{which is} happening at an Adventure, and so as never ^{the Epicu-} could be hit on again, tho' in much easier and ^{rean Error} trivial Instances, to do any thing like it. Or else ^{Nor by any} that it was the Work ^{not of one God but of Two other Prin-} *not of one God but of Two other Prin-* ^{ciple;} *Principles*, not only distinct but contrary; from ^{which is} One whereof Good things did proceed, from the ^{the Heresie} Other Bad and Evil Things were derived: Here- ^{of Marcion,} by making the true God but half a Deity, and ^{Manichæus} Co-partner with something worse, because more ^{and others.} Powerful, than a Devil, and falsely supposing that *Evil* was a Work of the *Creation*, which was the Effect only of the Creatures *Defection*, since God ^{Gen. i. 13.} *saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very Good.* Therefore, in opposition to both these Errors, we firmly believe that *the World was made by God only.* And also,

2. *That the World was Made by God the Father Almighty.* For so we are directed to profess our Faith hereof in our *Creed*, consonant to the *Scripture Phrase*, and the *Doctrine of our Catechism*, appropriating the *Creation* to the *Father*, as his distinguishing Personal Property, in respect of the Paternal Priority in the God-head, being the *First Person* in the *Blessed Trinity*; not exclusive of the other Two, but only to distinguish the Peculiarity of their Operation herein. ^{Jo. i. 1, 2,} The ^{3.} *Father Making the World By the Son*, and by the *Holy Ghost*, therefore, saith the *Apostle*, *—To us is but one God the Father, of whom are all things,* ^{1 Cor. 8.} *—Even He, who as it is in our Catechism*) ^{6.} *Made me and all the World;* and whom we say in our *Creed*, *I believe to be the Maker of Heaven and Earth,*

IV. Lastly, *The time when this Act was Executed* by this *Agent* on this *Subject*, to be supposed in our *Creed*, and expressed in the *Text*, was, in *the Beginning*; even in the *First Instant of Time*, when nothing hereof was done: Which plainly implies these Two things, *viz.* That *the World had a Beginning*; and that *the beginning it had was the very same here mention'd in the Text by Moses.*

Not Eternal.

1. That *the World had a Beginning*, is implied in its being *Created*, whereby *That is*, which before *was not*. And, tho' there can no Instant be assignable, before which the *World* might not have been *Created*, yet that, nevertheless, it actually had a *Temporal Beginning*, and that there was a time when nothing hereof was, is an *Article* of our *Faith*, whereby (as the *Apostle* expresses it) *we understand the worlds were framed*. And it is grounded upon the most irrefragable Arguments deduced from *Universal Tradition*, derived through the uninterrupted course of so many Ages down to us. Some Memorials of the Origin of the *World* have always been among all Nations. The first Rise, and Entertainment, and Propagation of an Universal belief whereof cannot be easie to imagine, nor was ever otherwise yet reasonably accounted for. It is evident from *Written Histories*, mentioning no Antiquities near so ancient as this of the Creation Recorded by *Moses*, who was probably the first of all Writers, and in so Nice and Obscure a Matter, being also Inspired, ought to be credited. It may be proved from the *Propagation of Mankind*, which even yet hath not been sufficient to People the whole Earth; a great part whereof is very probably yet undiscovered; and it is not yet Two Hundred

Hundred Years since one half of that which is now known was discovered, whereof also a great part is even yet uninhabited or incultivated. Whereas had the World been Eternal, it must long e're this have been overstock'd, and become too narrow for the Inhabitants. Yea, tho' allowing the addition but of a single Person Yearly, much more according to those Proportions wherein Men and Families are now multiplyed, notwithstanding all kinds of usual Devastations. That the World had a Beginning we gather also from the *Original of Particular Nations*; the first Rise and Growth of most whereof being so certainly and particularly Recorded, strongly inferreth a like beginning to the rest, altho' Records hereof may have been lost, or none ever kept. We may conclude the same from the *Novelty of Arts and Inventions*; scarce any being so Ancient, but that the Original and First Inventors of them are Recorded in Story; and without which, so sagacious and busie a Creature as Man, can never be reasonably supposed to have lived an Infinity of Ages. The same appears from the *Visible Corruptibility and gradual decay of some Material Parts of the World*; such as the sinking of Mountains in the Land, and wearing of Rocks in the Sea; which an Infinite Duration must necessarily long e're this have quite Dissolved, even at the Slowest rate they may be observed or can be imagined to be devoured by Time. And It, finally, cannot be otherwise by Reason of the *Nature and Number of Succession*, whereby *Productions* are observed to be made now, and by other than which our Fathers never did see them in the World; not actually consistent with Infinity, without most absurd Consequences and flat Contradictions. All which Topicks singly, and much more altogether, afford strong Convictions that the World had a Beginning. And

2. That

The Error
of Pread-
amitism.

Act. 17.
26.

1 Cor 15.

43.

Gen. 3. 20.

2. That the Beginning the World had, was the very same here mentioned in the Text by Moses, ought not to be doubted till another more probable Epocha shall be agreed upon for it; which yet hath never been pretended to, not even by those who cavil at this. For such there have been who have conceited that Moses's History here refers only to the Jewish Race; and that Adam and Eve were the Primitive Parents not of all the World, but only of the Jews; before whom some Ages, (no one knows how many) did exist. Whereas upon the same Hypothesis, they should also have affirm'd, that he gave an Account only of the Land of Judea, the Place to which those People were confined; since other Nations besides the Jews sprang from Adam and Eve, as certainly as the Earth, (of whose Creation the Verse after the Text speaketh,) comprehendeth more Places than that of the Jews. There is no reason to understand One in an Universal sense no more than the Other; and the Scriptures do not more expressly signify the Original of all the World by One, than of the whole Race of Mankind by the Other. For it is said that God made of one Blood [or Stock] all Nations of Men for to dwell on the face of the Earth. Upon this account Adam is called the First Man, absolutely, of the Earth, Earthy, and is noted to have called his Wifes Name Eve, because she was the Mother of all Living. Before whom, as there could therefore be no other Race of Men, so from them must the Beginning of the World be only Dated, according to the only true Account given thereof by Moses. Whereby it appears that the World is so far from being Eternal, that it is of no very long standing; and that the Opinion of Preadamitism for the Antiquity,

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tiquiry, is as groundless as that of the *Aristotelians* for the *Eternity of the World*; in opposition to both which we *Believe that God the Father Almighty, is the Maker of Heaven and Earth.*

The Actual Faith whereof must necessarily *beget and improve* in us the most Excellent Christian Graces.

1. *The highest Veneration and Esteem of God*; even from the Divine Perfections legible herein. Such is a *Power* both intensively and extensively Great and Infinite, able with so much Ease and Expedition to Rear and Uphold so vast a Fabrick! An astonishing *Wisdom* contriving such multitudes of variety, Digesting them so Commodiously, Connecting them so Firmly, and exposing such Harmonious Order and Beauty therein! An Imense and Boundless *Love and Goodness*, that extended it self in Affection and Care for so many Creatures, abundantly providing for the Need and Comfort of them all. And an August *Majesty*, that was the Author of those Beauties and Perfections, those Splendours and Magnificencies we do with so much Pleasure and Wonder cast our Eyes on every where about us! The Contemplation whereof hath raised not only Inspired *Prophets*, but Heathen *Philosophers* into fits of Composing Hymns and Eulogies to the Worlds Creator, whose Minds could not be empty or void of what the whole Earth is full, even the Glory of our Lord of Isa. 6. 3. *Hosts.*

2. *Love and Thankfulness* towards him from us, who are so highly and nearly concern'd in this great Production. For it was design'd with a particular regard and from an especial Good will unto us for our convenient and pleasant Entertainment. Wherefore we are made Tenants in Chief without

out either Desert in us, or Profit to the Creator.

3. *A firm Trust and Comfortable Hope*, at all times, in him, who was able to do so great things, and hath been willing to do so much for us. *Our help*, *Pf. 121. 3.* coming from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth, is a good ground, as of the Psalmist's Confidence so of our Security, that God will not suffer our foot to be removed. Yet not without,

4. *Deep Humiliation* from the Prospect hence yielded, Of the most Glorious Excellencies of God, which will put out the little Lights of our own kindling, whose Shine we are so apt to wanton with in our selves. From the consideration of the worth of other Creatures, so far excelling and out-stripping us in Strength or Courage, or Innocency, or in whatever else we can pride our selves; of all the Creation, Men, the Sons of fal'n Adam, being the only Companions of Devils, those Angels which lost their *own Habitations*, and are delivered into Chains of darkness to be reserved unto Judgment. Yea from a Sense of the Meanness of our own Original, in common with the most contemptible of other Creatures; made every whit of as good, if not better Materials; and they Senior to us in the Divine are, who had a Being before us. The Infinitely Wise and Gracious God, foreseeing Man's proneness to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, thus Ordering the Creation to Lecture him into Humility; that which way soever he cast his Eyes, he may lose the sight of his admired self; and either say to Corruption, *thou art my Father*, to the Worm, *thou art my Mother and my Sister*. Or if he scorn to stoop low, the higher he looks above himself, he should be cast down the lower, crying out with the Psalmist, *When I consider the Heavens, the work of thy Fingers, the Moon*

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Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained! What is Man that thou art mindful of him? Such a Nothing to himself will any Man appear, that will look but more abroad upon any thing else of the Creation. Whence finally to Crown these Graces, no less naturally will flow,

5. *A most Cheerful and Universal Obedience to God, appearing reasonable and necessary from us by the Right and Example visible herein. For by Virtue of our first Production, God hath undeniably absolute Dominion over us; and consequently there must be due unto him the most exact and compleat Obedience from us. Thy Hands have made me and Fashioned me; therefore, says the Psalmist, give me understanding that I may learn thy Commandments. And of all the Creatures, which have been derived from the same Fountain of Divine Goodness with our selves, none ever disobeyed the Voice of God but *Adam and Devils*. Even the most Rebellious and Unteachable things in Nature, (*Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapour, stormy Wind* fulfilling his Word,) whose Universal Obedience to the Will of the Creator failing to move us even to the same Affection and Desire to serve and please him, they all Conspire to upbraid and testify against us to our Condemnation, when God shall call unto them, saying, (as in the Prophet) *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, for the Lord hath spoken; I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib; but Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider.**

Ps. 119.

73.

Ps. 148. 1.

Isa. 1. 2, 3.

And thus, now having finished the First Article of our Creed, we have seen what we are oblig'd to Believe, both concerning God, in General, and the First Person in the Godhead, in Particular.

ticular. Whence every one making Profession of his Faith thereof, must necessarily understand himself declaring to this purpose, *viz. I Believe, and am fully perswaded and own that there is a God. And I Believe him to be such a Being as he hath revealed himself to be. A Spirit, Eternal, Immutable, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Infinitely Wise, True, Holy, Just and Good. And I believe that there is but One such Being: And I believe that this One is the Father, Essentially of all; but Eminently of our Lord Jesus Christ, as being the First of the Three Persons, which I believe are in the One Divine Nature. And whom I believe is Peculiarly the Almighty Governour of the Universe; whereof I also believe him to be the Creator. And in this Sense and Latitude, I firmly believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.*

According to which Belief, may the same God the Father; through the Merits of his Son, by the Influence of the Holy Ghost, evermore Guide and bring us all, in due time, to himself! To which Blessed Trinity be all Glory now and for ever. Amen.

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SERMON VII.
ON THE
Second Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Mat. i. 21.

— *And thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins.*

THE First Part of the *Creed*, concerning *God the Father*, having been now Explain'd; the next in Order, rightly succeeds, relating to *God the Son*, and his Work of *Redemption*; Faith in whom, is the Peculiar and Principal Duty of our Religion, as Christian. And therefore doth our *Catechism* admonish us hereof, as the next thing chiefly learnt in the *Articles* of our Belief, viz. *To Believe in God the Son who hath Redeemed me and all Mankind*. The which distinguishing Personal Operation of this Second Person in the *Holy Trinity*, the Six next following *Articles* in our *Creed* explain, in Three several Particulars, respecting, 1. The Person.
2. The

2. The *Humiliation*, and 3. The *Exaltation* of our Redeemer.

The *Person* of our Redeemer is the Argument of the *Second Article*, which we are now come to insist on, expressed in these words, *viz.* *And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord*; wherein he is proposed to our Belief as described, 1. By his Name, [*Jesus*] 2. By his Office, [*Christ*] and, 3. By his Relations with respect to God, [*His only Son,*] and with respect to us [*Our Lord.*]

It is the *Name* of our Redeemer that we are now to consider his *Person* by, as described and proposed to our *Belief* in this *Creed*; wherein the first thing we are Taught to confess of him is, that he is *Jesus*. Which tho' it be a common Name to be met with in the *Holy Scriptures*, as well as other *Jewish Writings*, both in the more *Ancient Hebrew* manner of writing it *Joshuah*, and in the *Modern Grecian* way of altering it to *Jesus*; (Many others having born the same Name) yet was it never appropriated to, nor its Import so eminently answered by any other in the same *Miraculous* manner. An Account whereof is the Argument of the Text; informing us that this *Name* was given at the special Command of God by an Angel; and that too for it's significancy, as importing that *Salvation* to be wrought by our *Blessed Saviour*, and the fulfilling of that *Eminent Prophecie*, whereby an *Universal Expectation* had been raised, foretelling that his *Name* should be called *Emmanuel*, which being Interpreted, (says our Evangelist) is *God with us*: *Jesus* our Saviour, being in the highest Propriety *God with us*. For therefore was his *Name* called *Jesus*, because he was to save his People from their Sins; and herein doth he answer the *Name* of *Emmanuel*, as, in such *Salvation*,

Ila. 7. 14.

vation, *God* is most eminently *with us*. And which *Name*, in its utmost Importance, we are to believe was given to, and made good by him, whom thereby we own for the *Saviour* of the World.

Two things therefore, are necessary to be here Explain'd. 1. The Nature of that *Salvation* Mankind stood in need of a Saviour for; and, 2. The Performances of our *Jesus*, whereby he procured it for us, and thereby manifested himself to be our *Saviour*. For to *believe in Jesus*, a Saviour, supposes a *Salvation* once needed; and to *believe* our Lord, to be *Jesus*, implies that he hath effected it for us.

I. Now, *Salvation* is a Deliverance from some *What Salvation is.* Evil. And the Evil of Man being nothing but *Sin*, with its Consequences; a Deliverance from it, was the only *Salvation* he was capable of. For Mankind, having fallen from their Primitive State of Uprightness and Innocence in their First Parents, became thenceforward lyable to Condemnation and Punishment: Insomuch that all that partake of the Nature are stain'd with its Guilt, and expos'd to its Doom, *being by Nature born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath.* And as we are Born, so must we have necessarily for ever Liv'd, had it not been for some Provision made and procured for our Escape and Deliverance herefrom, which is called our *Salvation*, and must consist in these Two things, *viz. Pardon of, and Power against Sin*; whereby alone we can be Saved from our Fallen State. And as Fallen Creatures are neither capable of, nor need a greater *Salvation* than this is, so is there really no other *Salvation*, that we have any manner of Ground or Encouragement to expect.

For it is only *Sin*, that is either *Evil* in its self, or the *Cause of Evil* to us; as being what is contrary to the Nature of God, and what sets us in his Displeasure at the farthest distance from him. And therefore in being *saved* from it, we are delivered from every thing hurtful, either in this World or the other, (from the *Wrath of God*, the *Torment of Conscience*, and *Miseries of Hell*) and restored to the Possibility of every thing Desirable to make us Happy in both Worlds, (The *Favour and good Will of God*, the *Peace of Conscience*, and the *Happiness of Heaven*.) Whereupon the

Pl. 32. 1. Inspired Psalmist pronounces him a *Blessed Man*, whose *Transgression is forgiven*, whose *Sin is covered*. *Unpardoned Sin* being utterly inconsistent with *Blessedness*, under which Men are necessarily most Miserable, and can be Happy only in their Deliverance from it.

Indeed it is hard to convince Men of this at present, who generally are in Love with their Sins, and desire no other Deliverance than only to be saved from the *Punishments of Sin*: Whereas such a *Salvation* was never meant, nor only needed by us. For it is not *Paradise* only, but *Uprightness of Nature* that Mankind lost by the Fall; and therefore it is *Innocence* as well as *Heaven* that is wanted, and Deliverance from *Guilt* as well as *Punishment* that is necessary to compleat our escape from the Evil we are fallen under, and to reinstate us in the Happiness lost by us. Even Heaven it self would be no Salvation to a Fallen Unreformed Creature; who, as he never possibly can come there, so if he could he would not be at ease, but rather more Miserable, while at so great a distance in his Capacities for it. The Salvation therefore of such Creatures as we

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are, must necessarily consist in our Deliverance from the State of Sin, which alone Capacitates and Secures our escaping Damnation, and which is effected by Holiness of Heart and Life, that turns us from Sin to Obedience, and restores us to the Divine Favour, by a full Pardon and free Justification, called therefore *Repentance unto Salvation*. A Converted Penitent State is the *Christians Salvation* at present, without which there is no other to be expected hereafter; it being but the very same *Salvation*, in different Degrees, to be *saved from Sin*, and to be *saved from Hell*; since he that is not first delivered from his Sins cannot escape Hell, nor he be Damnd thereto that is delivered from them: So that the *Salvation* of a Sinner can necessarily be no other, than a *Pardon and Reformation* of Sin here, in order to secure a safe Landing in *Heaven* hereafter. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

And thus much, I hope will not be thought impertinently said, since there is an apparent necessity of rectifying Mens Ordinary Notions of the *Gospel Salvation* of Sinners; which most Men talk, and too many live in hopes of, as if it were only a *Salvation* of them from future *Punishment*; which therefore they are alone solicitous to escape without any regard to their present *Guilt*. Like hardened Malefactors, who desire to be saved from the Gallows, only that they may hold on the Course of their Villanies so much the longer, and with greater Freedom. So all Men would be *saved*, but they would save and spare their Sins. Whereas, you have seen, to be *saved* is to be *Delivered* from the Guilt and Servitude of Sin, to Serve God here, and Live with him hereafter.

*Jesus a
Saviour.*

- II. And of this *Salvation*, we further believe that our [*Jesus*] was the only *Author*, for which he had that *Name* given him. This implies that we believe these two things of him, viz. That there was once such a *Person* in the *World*, whereof we have all the assurance that such *Matter of Fact* is capable of; and that he was such an one as his *Name* Imports; A *Saviour* of the *World*, to deliver from a *State of Sin and Death*. And this we are assured
- Rom. 1. he hath done. 1. As he Published and made known to
16. us the *Gospel*, which is the *Power of God* unto *Salvation*. 2. As he wrought out and purchased for us what he
- Col. 1. 14. Published. Having obtained for us *Redemption*
through his *Blood*, even the forgiveness of *Sins*. Having given himself as a *Ransom* for us; and thereby *Reconciled* us to *God*; and put us into a *Capacity of Salvation*; for which *God* is said to have sent his *Son* into the *World*, that the *World* through him might be saved. 3. As he also communicates *spiritual Strength and Power*, whereby we are enabled to *Resist and Conquer the Enemies* of our *Souls*, and the difficulties of being saved, being made free from *sin*, and become *Servants to God*, The
- Rom. 6. Law of the *Spirit of Life* in *Christ Jesus*, having freed
22. -8. 2. us from the *Law of Sin and Death*. 4. And Lastly, As he hath *Power* to confer this *Salvation* upon us, as
- Jo. 17. 2. a *Reward* of his *Sufferings* for us: The *Father* having given him this *Power* over all *Flesh*, that he should give *Eternal Life* to as many as he hath given him. Even to all who by *God's Grace* have persisted in faithful *Obedience* to him. He
- Heb. 7. 25. therefore is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto *God* by him, seeing he ever liveth to make *intercession* for them. Whence he is rightly
- 5. 9. called in *Scripture*, the *Author of Eternal Salvation*,
-12. 2. and

and the *Finisher of our Faith*, by whose Conduct alone we are delivered from Spiritual Thralldom, and brought through the *Desart State of Sin*, safe into the happy *Canaan of Grace and Glory*. *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be Saved.* Temporal Saviours, that have delivered some Particular People or Person from Corporal and Temporal Evils, there have been many; but there is only One Saviour of both Soul and Body, of all that obey him, and that delivers from Spiritual and Eternal Evils, to the joy of all People, and that is our *Jesus*. Act. 4. 12. Heb. 5. 9. Luk. 2. 10.

The Consideration of whom, under this endearing Name ought,

1. To secure our most Reverential Regard and Veneration towards the Memory of his Person, as of our greatest Benefactor, to whom we owe all we Enjoy or Hope for, and for whom we can never do enough that hath done so much for us. And as with Shame and Horror they ought to reflect on this, who profane this so Sacred a Name in wanton *Jests and Oaths*, or by mixing it (as some do) in *Charms and Spels* among a medly of insignificant Words, void of good Affections, and to very unwarrantable Purposes: Or (as others, no less unworthily, tho' in pretended Devotion, do) by detracting from, and debasing the Propriety of our Lord in the great Work of Man's Salvation, who Teach that with *Christ's Merits*, must be joined our Works in order to our Justification; and with his Satisfaction for the Wrath of God, our Satisfaction for the Temporal Punishment; and to his Intercession, the Intercession and Patronage of Saints, especially of the Virgin *Mary*, who is treated and depended on as much the

Abused in Oaths and Charms.

Debased by the Papists

By wicked
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Heb. 2. 3.
Salvation
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Greater Saviour ; hereby making Ours but half a Jesus, while they Own and Honour him as neither a Perfect nor an Absolute Saviour, contrary to our Faith profess'd here, and the Doctrine Taught by the Apostles. This indeed all do, who retain their Sins with this Name ; and profess Jesus to be their Saviour, while they continue in their Sins that will in the End Damn them, or which he never intended to Save them with ; yet him they make to Patronise for their Sins. And as with Shame and Horror, such I say, ought to Reflect on the Veneration due to such a Name profaned by them ; so ought we to approve and readily comply with (accounting it very rash and unreasonable to Condemn) the very Ancient and Devout Usage in our Church of Bowing at the Name of Jesus, designed to put us in Mind of him that is Named, and of our highest Obligation to him, peculiarly under this Name, as Jesus our Saviour ; recognizing him as such by this particular Act of Devotion. But the Consideration of the Person ought also,

2. To excite our utmost Regard and Care for the Salvation wrought by him for us ; it being, as the Apostle calls it, a Great Salvation, wherein we all are greatly Concern'd, and thereby greatly Obligated,

1. It is a great Salvation, in respect to the Great Evils we are saved from, the Great Happiness we are restored to, the Great Author of our Salvation, the Great Price it Cost him, the Great Wonder of Effecting it, and the Great Power whereby it Actually Saveth such as We are ; it being every way Great and Astonishing, beyond both Parallel and Expression ; fulfilling the Name Jesus, and declaring our Jesus to be the Saviour. So great a Matter,

Matter, therefore requires our Great Regard; and what God hath done in an Extraordinary manner for us, ought to be accepted and prized in an Extraordinary manner by us. And yet what a little thing do Men generally esteem their *Salvation* to be, by their little or no concern for it. For what is there of any Value at all with us, that we do not regard more than this? Men are to their Capacities, Wise and Industrious in every thing else in comparison hereof; which yet is more to them than all their other Concerns in the World, and without a due regard to this, none of their other Concerns will shortly be of any avail to them.

1. *Herein*, also was said, *All are Greatly Concern'd*; to whom so *Great Salvation* is proffer'd; and whom our *Jesus*, as the Universal Saviour of the World, is able and willing to *save from their Sins*, and thereby make *his own People*. Which surely is a wonderful Mercy, in being offered to *Man* rather than to *Angels*, that were Creatures of a Superiour Order, and not at so great a distance from its Donour, and had no less need of it, and it may be deserved it better, and might have made a better return for it; who yet are passed by, in their Lapsed State, without any Overtures of *Salvation* made to them; and poor sinful and helpless *Man* remembered, and effectually relieved, that could no way Deserve or Requite such a Benefit, whereof he had forfeited all manner of Expectation. A Great Thing! For such a Creature, in such Circumstances, to be thus put into a State of Salvation by such a Person! *Angels* Rejected and *Man* Regarded! And that not only, One or Two of the most Choice, but the whole Race of *Mankind*; it being said that

- Heb. 2. 9. *Christ tasted Death for every Man, so that however of Old Salvation was only of the Jews, yet now*
- Lu. 2. 3. *our Jesus is said to be a Light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the Glory of his People Israel. And, now*
- A&T. 10. 34. *God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him. And therefore the Angel publishing*
- Lu. 2. 10. *the Birth of this Jesus, said to the Shepherds, Behold, I bring you Good Tidings of great Joy, which*
- 1 Tim. 2. 6. *shall be unto all People. St. Paul also assures us that Christ gave himself a Ransom for all; and St. John,*
- 1 Jo. 2. 2. *That he is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World. And*
- 2 Pet. 2. 1. *therefore St. Peter speaks of some denying the Lord that bought them; even Those also being the Purchase of Christ, and whom he came to save from their Sins, that denying him were not saved by him. Wherefore this Salvation seems greatly to be less'n'd by some, who would have it to be restrain'd to a certain number of Choice Persons, which is so generously offered to all; and from which none are excluded, but such only as exclude themselves by their Obstinacy and Impenitency. And therefore,*

Obligatory
to Duty.

3. *Hereby are all Obliged, to the Practice of all Christian Duties, particularly. 1. To Love and Gratitude towards Jesus our Saviour, as for the greatest Kindness we needed, or could be done for us, so for the freeness and fulness of the Benefit, and dearness of its Purchase for us; to*
- 2 Cor. 5. 14. *which the Love of Christ constraining us; If any Man Love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Marana-tha. Rejoycing in the Name where-*
- 1 Cor. 16. 22. *in our Happiness is involv'd; and with inflamed Heart, breathing forth Praises and Thanksgivings thereto. 2. To Exalted Esteem for the Gos-*

spel

spel, bringing us the Tidings and Tenders hereof. Harkening to its Message, submitting gladly to its Guidance; walking by its Rule; consulting its Councils; familiarizing it to our Converse; delighting our selves therein; and making it our business to search out its hidden Treasures, till we experience it to become to us, what it is in it self, the Gospel of our Salvation, as well as of our Jesus. And, 3. To sincere and In-
ire Obedience; with unwearied Diligence, expressing our Submission and regard to his Will, *1 Cor. 6.*
whose we are; and to our utmost endeavouring to *19, 20.*
 please him in every thing, who hath Saved us from all Evil. With eager Desires and stedfast Resolutions, accepting our Deliverance from him, upon his own Terms, and in his own Way. With Pious Zeal, and Fervent Charity, furthering the great Design and Import of this his Name, in respect both of our selves and others; by leaving all our Sins, and persuading others, by good Advice, seasonable Reproof, instant Intreaty, and an Exemplary Holy Life, to do so too. Not daring to Slight much less to Oppose, and most of all to Renounce so great Salvation, as those Wretches do, who call so oft and Impudently upon God to Damn them, frustrating thereby the Excellent Design and Kind Endeavours of the Son of God to Save; and rendring a Loving Saviour an Incensed Judge, to Doom for ever to the Miseries Men choose themselves, and will not suffer him to Save them from. Such seasonable warning and wholesome Instruction is our Belief in Jesus fruitful of; being the Name our Redeemer is Describ'd by to us; and wherein, that it may not be lost, or prove insignificant,
 add

add we our Prayer, in the Form our Church
prescribeth;

*Collect for
the Sixth
Sunday af-
ter the E-
piphany.*

O Lord, whose Blessed Son was manifested, that
he might destroy the Works of the Devil, and
make us the Sons of God, and Heirs of Eternal
Life; Grant us we beseech thee, that having
this Hope, we may purify our selves, even as he
is pure; that when he shall appear again with
Power, and Great Glory, we may be made like
unto him in his Eternal and Glorious Kingdom,
where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy
Ghost, he Liveth and Reigneth ever one God
World without end. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

ON THE

Second Article

OF THE

APOSTLES CREED.

John vi. 69.

*And we believe, and are sure that thou art
That Christ.*

After the Name, the next thing where-
by the Person of our Redeemer is de-
scrib'd and propos'd to our Belief, is
his Office and Dignity; acknowledg'd
by St. Peter in the Text, and profess'd by us in
our Creed by the word *Christ*, signifying in Greek,
what *Messiah* doth in Hebrew, *Anointed*. And
therefore *Andrew* meeting with our Lord, tells
his Brother *Simon*, that he had found the *Messiah*,
which the Evangelist saith, is by Interpretation, *The* Jo. 1. 41.
Christ; denoting in the Scripture Sense, One set apart
and Consecrated to some special Office, or Extra-
ordinary Employment, such as *Prophet*, *Priest*, and
King,

Christ was King. Whereof tho' there have been very many in the World, yet, above all the rest, there was one such *Anointed* Person, in a more signal Gal. 3. 16, and peculiar manner Design'd, to these several Act. 3. 22. Charges and Functions, to be by God's Appointment, the *Christ* or *Messiah*, promis'd Before and Luk. 3. 15. Under the Law; and unanimously expected by God's People to make his appearance in the World, in due time, long before it came to pass. Which time is now, long since past; and the Promis'd and then Expected *Messiah*, hath already been in the World. Those *Prophecies*, having been evidently fulfilled, that pointed at the time of his coming, *the Scepter being departed from Judah*, which was to abide *till Shiloh came*; The *Second Jewish Temple* being destroy'd, wherein he was to appear; and *Daniel's Seventy Weeks* being expired to the cutting off *Messiah the Prince*, and the Desolation of *Jerusalem*, and the Jewish Nation. Nothing hinders the most Infidell Jew from clearly seeing and acknowledging of which, but a groundless prepossession of the Unlawfulness of Computing the Time of the *Messiah's* coming, and of their Duty still to wait for him, though he tarries never so long. Which is to give up their Cause and confess that the fulfilling of those *Prophecies* is not to be objected against, but by those who are resolved not to Believe.

The *Messiah*, then, having been in the World, and the Time of his coming undoubtedly past; nothing can be more reasonable and necessary than to Believe that *Jesus* our Saviour was *He*; which is what this Part of the *Article* intends, and the Doctrine our Religion is wholly founded on. This I shall first *Prove*, and then inquire in-
to

*Christ al-
ready come.*

Gen. 49.
10.

Mal. 3. 1.

Hag. 2. 6.

Can. 9. 24.

to the Nature of his *Unction* whereby *Jesus* became *That Christ* or Anointed One.

I. In order to prove *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, I shall consider, 1. The Circumstances belonging to the *Messiahs* Appearance. 2. The Personal Characters ascribed to him. 3. The Performances whereby he was to distinguish himself. And Lastly, The Consequences depending hereupon. All which things being found exactly to agree to our *Saviour*, will be sufficient establishment of our *Belief* that *Jesus* is that *Christ*. And that he is so, plainly appears,

1. If we Consider the Circumstances belonging to the *Messiahs* Appearance, the Time whereof did exactly correspond with that wherein our *Jesus* did Come; being then in its *Fulness*, both in respect to past *Predictions* and present *Seasonableness*; the *Prophecies* speaking hereof being applicable to none other Person, because none other came to fulfill them; and he just coming, when things were disposed most to favour his Design, and an Expectation of him was raised to its highest pitch, and things conspired with good advantage, for his Entertainment in the World. His Birth was exactly such as was foretold that of the *Messiah* should be; in respect of the *Lineage and Family* Gen. 22. he was to descend from; (being an *Israelite*; of 18. the *Tribe of Judah*; and of the *Family of David*;) — 49. 10. Isa. 11. 1. in respect of the *Place* where he was to be Born, 10. 34. (in the Town of *Bethlehem*, by a very particular Providence,) in respect also, of the *Manner* of Mic. 5. 2. his Birth, being Conceived and Born, (as never Mat. 2. 5. 6. Man but our *Jesus* was, and the *Messiah* was to be) of a Pure *Virgin*. Yea his very abode and Places of most usual Converse and Manifestation of him. Isa. 7. 14.

Isa. 9. 1, 2. himself to the World, were determin'd to Galilee, and more particularly to the Temple, (being
 Lu. 10. 15. Conceived, and Dwelling, and Preaching, and
 Hag. 2. 7. Working his First Miracle in the one; and Forty
 Mal. 3. 1. Days after his Birth Presented, and at Twelve
 Lu. 2. 12. Years Old, Disputing and Questioning with the
 22, 46. Doctors, and afterwards daily Teaching in the
 other) agreeing plainly with what was Predicted of the *Messiah*. And, finally, his *State and Condition* were what was foretold He should manifest himself in, and what suited best his Designs of Dwelling among Men; as a Spiritual Person, exemplifying the hardest Duties of Religion, in Humility, Mortification, and Contempt of all Worldly Power and Splendor; Poor and Mean, *despised and rejected of Men, in whom was no Form or Comeliness*. All which Circumstances of Time, and Birth, and Abode, and Condition, agreeing exactly to our *Jesus*, as Predicted of the *Messiah*, or *Christ*, and agreeing in like manner to no other Person, they plainly prove him to be the very Person pointed at thereby, and demonstrate, as we profess, *Jesus* to be the *Christ*. The same no less appears.

His Characters.

Pf. 45. 7.
Is. 11. 5.

Is. 50. 4.

2. If we consider further the Personal Characters, ascribed by Prophecy to the *Messiah*, as Expedient for him, to dispose and fit him for his great Employ, with utmost Advantage and especial Decency. These are in general, Perfect Innocency and Integrity; as loving Righteousness and hating Wickedness: and more Particularly, Spiritual Wisdom and Understanding; the spirit of Council and Might, the spirit of Knowledge and Fear of the Lord. Eloquence and Skill to Instruct and Teach; The Lord having given him the Tongue of the Learned, to know how to speak a word in Season to him that is Weary. Meekness

ness and Gentle Compassion towards Humane Infirmities and Afflictions; who was to feed his flock like a Shepherd, &c. *A Bruised Reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench.* Meekness — *Iſa. 40. 11.* and Humbleness of Converse, *Lowly and Riding upon an Aſs.* Peaceable and Quiet Disposition, *Not crying, nor striving, neither any Man hearing his Voice in the Streets.* Admirable Patience under Afflictions; *He was Oppressed, and he was Afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth, &c.* Neither — *53. 7.* hid he his Face from shame and spitting; And Lastly, an invincible Courage and Resolution in God's Service, together with a strong Confidence in God, and Intire Submission to his Will; *He was not Rebelious, neither turned away his Back, --- But ſaw his Face like a flint, &c.* As such were the Glorious Qualities of him that was foretold to be the Messiah, so were they eminently the Endowments of Jesus; who in his Person did fully correspond to, and by his Practice thoroughly make good, this high Moral Character sometimes even to the Letter, but always to the very utmost support of it, as the unexceptionable Story of his Life doth plainly shew. Inſomuch that it is impossible any other should be hereby Described, and infallibly certain that he was so. And even yet more clearly will this appear,

3. If we consider, moreover, the Performances *His Per-* Predicted of the Messiah; even the Doctrine he was *formances.* to Teach, the Works he was to Do, and the Sufferings he was to Undergo; being all fulfilled by *His Do-ings.* our Saviour. 1. The Doctrine of the Messiah, was *Deut. 18.* foretold by the Prophets, and expected by the *Iſa. 42. 1. 4.* Jews, to be not only by Divine Inspiration, but in Perfection; to consummate and make a Complete discovery of Divine Truth; after which

no other Revelation was to be either looked for or needed; and his Days Styled *The Last Days*, in which an intire Instruction and final Resolution in all Points might be expected, and which the *Woman of Samaria* (speaking according to the then current Persuasion) intimated; saying, *I know that the Messiah cometh, and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.* For doubtless it was very reasonable to suppose that God would at some time or season complete the Revelation concerning himself and Mankind in relation to him, and tell them all things that he required from them, and was necessary for them to know concerning him. To which not only his *Goodness and Compassion* to our Insufficiency doth Instigate him, as well as his *Wisdom* in reference to his own Glory, and our Capacities for it direct him; but even his *Justice* in point of his Government, and his *Majesty*, in vindication of his Sovereignty seem in a manner to oblige him. It is also certain that no other Revelation of that Kind and Importance hath been made, besides that which came by our *Jesus*. For Ancient *Paganism* plainly appears not to have proceeded at all from Divine Revelation, but only from Humane Invention, or Diabolical Suggestion; being nothing but a lump of Confusion and Inconsistencies, of Vanity and Folly of Deformity and Filthiness; Clancularly delivered at first, Directed to Improper and Unbecoming Objects of Religious Worship, Condemn'd and Derided by the Wisest of the very *Heathens* themselves; and sustain'd more by the Force of Authority than Power of Persuasion concerning any Truth therein. The Prevalency whereof at any time in the World, as it more manifested the need of some full and plain

plain Discovery of God's Mind, for his own Glory and our Good ; so such a Discovery made by Christ, freeing us from so deplorable Errors and Mischiefs, obliges us to hearty Gratitude and faithful Improvement. In like manner, *Mahometanism*, which bears so considerable a port in the World, evidently appears to be no less a Cheat, and impossible to proceed from the true God ; being Junior to *Christianity*, that was to be the Last Revelation ; being first broached in the most Confused, Ignorant, and Vicious Times ; in the Desarts of *Arabia*, the most blind and obscure Corner of the Earth ; by juggling Tricks and Seditious Violence ; by one that was Branded with all the Marks of Impostour, being of a base Education, Turbulent Disposition, and Vicious Life ; and consisting of an absurd and dangerously medly of the very dregs of *Christian Heresies*, unskillfully tempered with some Ingredients of *Judaism* and *Paganism*, fitted to the most brutish part, and prejudicial to the Spirit and Reason of Man. And Finally, as for *Judaism*, tho' its Divine Original is not questioned, nor its Truth and Goodness gainsay'd ; Yet was it far from being such a perfect and final Revelation, as might reasonably be expected, and was predicted and promised that God would make. It not being intended for the Instruction and Obligation of Mankind, but only for one particular Nation ; suited to that Time and People, and Inferiour Ends in order to prepare for an higher and better dispensation ; consisting of Laborious and Expensive Service, having only Temporal Rewards ; and destitute of any promise of supernatural Strength and Assistance to perform it. Not designed for perpetual Obligation and Use, as the utmost

utmost God ever intended ; and now by his Providence has remarkably discountenanced, and laid aside. And these being all the Religions in the World (the various pretensions of Enthusiastical Impostors, being only the spurious Excrescences either from *Christianity*, or subordinate to one of these ; of no considerable progress, nor long continuance ; and generally disclaimed ;) and none of these appearing possible to be a Complete Revelation of God's Mind, according to his Promise, and Man's Need and Expectation ; it follows that that Revelation which came by our *Jesús*, is only such ; and that He consequently is the true *Messiah*, whose Doctrine agrees exactly to that Person. It being in its nature such as obligeth all Men, is worthy of God, and suitable to his Designs of Glorifying himself, and Obliging his Creatures ; which therefore exceeds all other Institutions which came from God, and completes and perfects Divine Revelation. It Assigns a true proper and complete Character or Notion (to our Condition and Capacity) of the *Divine Nature* ; informs us plainly and faithfully concerning our *own Nature*, as to its Original, End, and State, whether past, present, or to come, and prescribes a most accurate *Rule of Life*, suitable to our Nature and conduceable to our Welfare ; delivering it *Pure* from allay, and *Free* from all burthensome Encumbrances ; giving us the advantage of a *Lively Copy*, and visible Standard thereof ; propounding the most valid and powerful *Arguments* to persuade Men to obey it ; providing sufficient *Helps and Ability* to practice by it ; furnishing us with the best *Supports* to undergo patiently, whatever Crosses or Difficulties may be met with ; being alone able to *appease and satisfy Conscience*, breed-

breeding therein a well-grounded Hope, and Solid Peace; and finally propounding and asserting it self in a peculiar *convincing and satisfactory manner*, with great plainness and simplicity, yet with a Majestick and awful Confidence. All which are the peculiar Excellencies of the *Christian Religion*; Distinguishing it from all others; manifesting its Truth and Divinity, and plainly proving it to be the very Doctrine of the *Messiah*; and that our *Jesus*, who alone Taught it, was none other than the Christ.

2. The next of whose *Performances* predicted of, and no less discovering his Person was his *Works*; which were to be of a *Miraculous Nature*; *Works*. so prophesied of him as to his particular Cures of the *Blind*, and *Deaf*, and *Lame* and *Dumb*; and the Ancient *Jews* were of that Opinion and look'd for it, (however the Modern in defence of their unreasonable Infidelity now deny it, affirming that the *Messiah* was not to do any Miracle when he came.) And good reason was there that so it should be; even in respect of his *Person*, assuming such Authority, and pretending to come from God. In respect of the Nature of his *Errand*, to Reform the World, and vanquish the Powers and Policies of Hell, not to be effected by Natural and Ordinary Means. In respect of the *Persons* he had to deal with, even the *Jews*, that were wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and uncapable of Conviction by any other, and the *Gentiles* to whom all other Methods of Instruction had already been applyed by their *Philosophers*; and for accommodation to the Genes, and Capacity of *Humane Nature*, that is soonest and deepest impress'd hereby. Finally, this is agreeable to God's usual Method of proceeding, whereby to distinguish his

Isa. 35. 3.

Jo. 7. 31.

Mat. 12.

38.

his own Messengers from all ordinary Persons and false Pretenders. So that *Miracles* are a good and necessary Testimony, provided we are sure that they are *Miracles* strictly so called, such as the *Messiah* was to work, and not such as false Prophets, and Magicians, and Antichrists, have sometimes counterfeited. And such being those of our *Jesus*, they are a convincing proof that he was the *Messiah*; because doing these Works of Wonder, which never any other but he did; whose *Miracles* were not only *Real*, but *Extraordinary*, distinguishable from False, and surpassing all other True *Miracles*: Inasmuch as some of them were stupendiously *Great*, and more peculiarly *Divine*; full of *Mercy and Kindness*; The effects of an *Inherent Omnipotency*. In Number they were *Many*; yet not one done *Needlessly*, for Ostentation or Vanity, but always upon *Inducements* of Weight and Necessity, in great *Variety*, and constant *Success*; in the most *Open and Publick* manner; and all intended for some *Good* to Men's Bodies, Souls, or God's Glory. Such *Works* bearing the most undeniable witness to him that doth them, that

Jo. 5. 36. *the Father hath sent him*; and therefore also are we
 —20. 31. told by St. *John*, that they are Recorded for this end; *These things*, says he, *being written*, that ye might believe that *Jesus is the Christ*.

Sufferings. 3. The *Messiah's Sufferings*, predicted of him, were also accomplished in those of *Jesus*; who was

Isa. 53. 3. so as never any besides him was, that *Man of*
 Ps. 41. 9. *Sorrows*, and acquainted with Grief. In the same
 Zach. 11. mean Condition of Life, and the same Indignity
 12. and Pain in his Death. Even so as was foretold
 Ps. 22. 16. the very *Treachery* that betray'd him, the *Rate* he
 —v. 7, 8. was valued at, the *Wound* wherewith he was Pierced the very *Parts* that were Torn and Wounded, the

the *Flouts* he received, the *Mournful* words he uttered, the *Malefactors* he suffered with, the very circumstance of his *Thirst*, and the *Liquor* given him then to Drink, the Soldiers manner of *sharing his Garments*; and his own *Resigned and quiet Comportment* herein. Inſomuch that even the *Jews*, not able hence to deny *Jeſus* to have been the *Chriſt*, moſt groundleſſly have conceited a double *Meſſiah*, one to *Suffer*, and the other to *Reign*; of neceſſity conceding *Jeſus* to be the *Fiſt*, and we thence concluding him to be alſo the *Laſt*, as being ſure there is but one *Chriſt*; all whoſe *Perfor- mances*, (aſto his *Doctrine*, *Miracles*, and *Sufferings*) being our *Lords* only, we therefore *Be- lieve* him to be *that Chriſt*.

4. Laſtly, If we conſider the *Conſequences* alſo hereof, (even his *Burial*, *Reſurrection*, *Ascenſion*, Deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and ſucceſs of his *Gospel*, being all foretold of the *Meſſiah*, and fulfilled in our *Jeſus*) there can be no room left for a Doubt of his being that *Divine Perſon*. For, to a Letter, agreeably herewith, *He made his Grave with the Wicked, and with the Rich in his Death*; neither did God *Suffer* this his *Holy One* to ſee *Corruption*, whom after *Two days* he revived; and in the *Third day* raiſed him up, as *Hoſea* Typically Propheſyed of him. And as the *Pſalmiſt* no leſs directly in the *Apoſtles* ſence, foretold his *ascending on high*, and *leading Captivity Captive*, and receiving *Gifts for Men*, according to his own *Promise*, which he made good, and thereby attested himſelf to be a true *Prophet*, in ſending down the moſt *Miraculous gift* of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon his firſt *Followers*; whereby all *Nations* were fetch'd in to ſerve him, and all *Kings* made to fall down before him, all *People and Kingdoms* ſlowing unto, and all *Opposi- tions*

—v. 1.
If. 53. 12.
Pf. 69. 21.
—22. 18.
If. 53. 7, 8.

The Conſe-
quences of
Chriſt's
coming.

If. 53. 9.

A&. 2. 31.

Hof. 6. 2.

Pf. 68. 18.

Eph. 4. 8.

Pf. 72. 11.

Iſa. 2. 2.

tions in a Miraculous manner giving way to the powerful Progress of the Gospel, above the Power of Natural Causes, and against the Course of Humane Affairs. In its Doctrine being novel and strange, and very disagreeable to the Inclination of Corrupt Nature, and of those Times. Its being *Preached* by the Poor, the Despised, and Uncared, under the greatest Discouragements and Dangers; without *Wit or Subtily*, in the most plain and simple manner; and yet attended with that Power of Conviction, as suddenly to prevail against every thing that stood in its way; triumphing over Majesty, Learning, Superstition, Malice, Power, Darkness, Men and Devils; subduing the World to the Faith and Obedience of it self. All and any of which things, it is unimaginable how they should thus come to pass, had not God interposed his Omnipotent Arm, to point out to us our *Jesus* to be his very *Christ*. For, (to sum up the Argument) He who was in the World at the *Time* when the Messiah was to come, and no other at that time, or since, pretended to be so: He who was *Born* of the Family, in the same Place, in the same Miraculous Manner, who appeared on the same spot of Ground, and Lived in the same State and Condition, which the Prophets foretold of the Birth, Appearance and Quality of the *Messiah*: He who was endowed with all those Extraordinary Gifts and Graces, Taught all those Truths, Wrought all those Miracles, and Suffered all those Indignities, which the *Messias* was to be Endowed with, Teach, Do, and Suffer: He who was Buried, Raised up from Death to Life again, was received up into Glory, sent thence those Miraculous Powers and Gifts, and whose Doctrine was received in all Nations, according to

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Perfo

to the Character of the *Messias*, He was certainly the true *Christ*; and such alone is our *Jesus*.

II. Consider we then (as upon this *Belief* is necessary and now seasonable) *The nature of his Uncti-* *The Nature*
on, wherein it did consist, and what are the proper *of his A-*
 Effects thereof. For he being the *Anointed*, and yet *nointing-*
 never Anointed with Oyl, as under the Law it was customary, it is not the External (which was but Typical, and disused sometime before our *Christ's* Appearance) but some internal Anointing, that answered all the Ends and Designs, and produced the same Effects, tho' in a far more Excellent and Peculiar manner, than whatever follow'd the Anointing with material Oyl, appropriated for that purpose. In respect of which *Jesus* was properly the *Lord's Anointed*, as he was from the first Consecrated and separated by a real Infusion of Divine Grace and Power, qualifying and inabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary Functions, which Anointing usually was design'd for, of *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*: *God Anointing Jesus of Nazareth*, *Act. 10. 38.* (saith *St. Peter*) *with the Holy Ghost*; hereby uniting the Jewish Polity, (which consisted in these three Offices, and was to cease at the coming of the *Messiah*) making all One in *Christ*, and qualifying him for the Redemption and Salvation of Sinners, by teaching the will of God, by attoning for Guilt, and by Ruling, Protecting, and Rewarding and Punishing. And whom therefore in Confessing him to be the *Christ*, we acknowledge to have executed these Three Offices of *Prophet*, *Priest* and *King*, for the Salvation of Sinners. *Prophet.*
Dent. 18.

1. *His Office of a Prophet*, was peculiar to the *18.*
 Person of the *Messiah*, whom the *Jews* expected *Jo. 1. 37.*

under that Notion ; to which our *Jesus* was extraordinarily Commission'd, and perfectly fulfilled in his Administrations, both while he lived on Earth ; in Teaching the Will of God, Confirming what he Taught, by an Exemplary Life and Extraordinary Performances, and exactly foretelling Events ; and now he resides even in

Eph. 4. 8. Heaven, continuing, upon all occasions, by his **11, 12.** *Holy Spirit*, and a settled Ministry of his *Ambassadors*, to impart to his faithful People, all needful Instruction in Truth, Direction in Practice, Admonition to Duty, and Comfort in Trouble.

Priest. 2. *His Office of a Priest.* It belonging to the *Messias* to be a *Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck*, to which also our *Jesus* being Anointed, compleatly fulfilled it by way of *Oblation*, giving himself an *Offering*, and a *Sacrifice to God* for

Eph. 5. 2. a *sweet smelling Savour* : By way of *Intercession*, both for pardon of our *Sins* and acceptance of our *Services*, being entred the *Holy of Holies*, not made with *Hands*, and there appearing before **Rom. 8.** God in our behalf ; and by way of *Benediction*, **34.** thence Blessing us with all *spiritual Blessings in Heavenly places* [or things] *In turning* [i. e. in affording all needful means to turn] every one from his **Eph. 1. 3.** *Iniquities*, which of all others is to be reckoned as **Acts 3. 26** the greatest Blessing.

King. 3. Finally, *His Office of a King*, (to which the **Isa. 9. 6.** *Messiah* was designed, and usually Prophesied of **Jo. 1. 45,** as such, and so expected by all) our *Jesus* was **49.** most signally invested with by *Nature and Birth* ; **Acts 2. 36.** as he was the *Son of God*, by *Divine Designation and Appointment* ; to whom the *Father* gave *Authority to execute Judgment* ; and by *Merit and Purchase* ; for the *Suffering of Death*, being *Crowned with* **Heb. 2. 9.** *Glory and Honour* ; by *Conquest*, having delivered us **Col. 1. 13.** from

from the Power of Darkneſs ; and by our own Election and free Choice, whoſe Name we have Named upon our ſelves, and thereby devoted our ſelves to his Government, by Engagement to depart from all Iniquity. Whoſe Kingdom, tho' not of this World; neither Reſembling nor Uſurping any Worldly Authority (as the Jews carnally dream) yet is it infinitely Surpaſſing and Superiour to all other Kingdoms ; in reſpect of its Continuance, being perpetual, whereof there ſhall be no end : In reſpect of Extent, being Universal, to which every knee ſhall bow, all Nations are Vaſſals, every Creature Subject, the Church eſpecially related, and the Hearts and Conſciences of every true Member thereof inviſibly Influenced, and Ruled only thereby ; And in reſpect alſo, of its Exerciſe and Adminiſtration, in Diſpenſation of the beſt Laws, in Proviſion of the ſafeſt Defence and Protection, in Diſtribution of the moſt Righteous Judgment, and in Deſtruction of all ſorts of Enemies, both Temporal (ſuch were the Jews and Romans) and Spiritual (as are Sin, and Wicked Men, the Devil that was ſeen like lightning to fall from Heaven, and the laſt Enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed, Death.) In conſideration of all which things, in believing Jeſus to be the Chriſt, even the Lord's Anointed, we neceſſarily alſo acknowledge him to be in the moſt peculiarly eminent manner, our Prophet, Prieſt, and King.

Herein we lay the main Foundation of our Chriſtian Faith ; in vain believing him to be Jeſus our Saviour, whom alſo we do not acknowledge to be the Lord's Chriſt ; who alone was Commiſſion'd and Qualify'd to procure Salvation for us ; Revealing it as a Prophet, procuring it for us as a Prieſt, and Conſerring it on us as a King ; and which

2 Tim. 2.

19.

Jo. 18. 36.

If. 9. 7.

Lu. 1. 33.

Phil. 2. 9,

10.

Lu. 10. 18.

1 Cor. 15.

26.

The Appli-
cation.

which therefore was the Point particularly insisted on, and especially press'd in all the Preaching of the *Apostles*; *Testifying that Jesus was the Christ*; without which in vain we do pretend to *Faith*, or call our selves *Christians*.

This Consideration ought to beget in every one of us a Practice answerable to our Concern in such his Offices. As our *Prophet*, with a Careful Attention and Docile Mind hearkening to his Admonitions and Instructions, intirely and sincerely, yeilding our Belief and Obedience thereto. As our *Priest*, for ease and freedom from the Guilt and Burden of our Sins, *drawing near to*, and depending on the Propitiation made by him, with a true Heart, in full assurance of Faith, as the Apostle exhorts. And as our *King*, inviolably maintaining our due Allegiance to him; rendring him faithfully all Honour, Obedience and Subjection, and fighting resolutely all his Battles against his and our Enemies, and flying to his Protection and Assistance in all our Difficulties and Needs. In a word, since *Jesus is Christ*, let us be *Christians*; making the same Profession in Practice as we do in our Belief; adding a Good Life to Good Arguments to prove him so; without which no Arguments will prove good enough to clear us from the Guilt and Scandal of treating him as an *Impostour*, and manifesting our selves to be *Infidels*. Our *Jesus* being *That Christ* to us, no otherwise than just as we are *Christians* towards him, from whom we derive this Name; and in whom we are *Established and Anointed* (as St. Paul teaches) and we have an *Unction from the Holy One* (saith St. John) and the anointing which we have received from him abideth in us. By such an Anointing therefore remaining upon us, from such our Profession of him,

Act. 17. 2,

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18. 5.Heb. 10.
21, 22.

2 Cor. 1.

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1 Jo. 2. 20,

27.

him, we are obliged to a conformity to the Holiness of his Life, to live as the *Anointed of God in Christ Jesus*.

The Good God therefore grant that all we who have *Named the Name of Christ*, [i. e. who confess *Jesus to be That Christ*, and our selves to be his Followers] may be so careful to follow him as to *depart from all Iniquity*, that we may *adorn his Doctrine in all things*, and that the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, may teach us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts; and to live Soberly, Righteously and Godlily in this present World; looking for that Blessed Hope, and the Glorious Appearance of the great God, and our Saviour, who is *Jesus, That very Christ*, To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost be all the Glory, World without end. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON IX.
ON THE
Second Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

John i, 14.

— *The only begotten of the Father.*

AFTER the Name and Office, the last particular whereby the Person of our Redeemer is described and proposed to our Belief in this Second Article of our Creed, (which we are yet upon) is his Relation, with respect both to God and Us. With respect to God, we are Taught to believe Jesus Christ to be his only Son, and with respect to our selves, that he is our Lord.

The First of these is what our Text, conformable to our Creed expresseth. The Explanation whereof will oblige us to consider this Relation of Christs, with respect to God, both as to its Truth and

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and *Meaning*, together with the *Use* influenced by our *Belief* hereof.

I. *The Truth of Jesus Christ's being the only begotten of the Father, or God's only Son, is consonant to what the Ancient Prophets did foretel, what God's People were generally persuaded of, and what the Evangelical Scriptures do every where Teach concerning him.* The Filia-
tion of
Christ.

1. *He that was foretold to be the Saviour of the World, was also foretold to be the Son of God; intended by what was spoken of King Solomon, representing and prefiguring him; He shall be my Son, and I will be his Father, and I will establish the Throne of his Kingdom over Israel for ever. And again, I have chosen him to be my Son, and I will be his Father, and he shall cry unto me, thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation: also I will make him my First-born higher than the Kings of the Earth; and thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Which Predictions were generally understood of the *Messiah*. 1 Chr. 22.
19.
—29. 6.
Pl. 89. 26,
27.
—2. 7.

2. *And under this Character he was expected. Nathanael no sooner being convinced that Jesus was Christ, but confess'd him also to be the Son of God; these being inseparable adjuncts, whereof one implied the other, according to the sense then current; and previous to a Confession of him. Accordingly Martha says, I believe thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the World. And the High-Priest, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God; yea, the very Devils knew and acknowledg'd this, and therefore cryed out, What have we to do with thee Jesus, Thou Son of God?* Jo. 1. 49.
—11. 27.
Mat. 26.
63.
—8. 29.

3. Thus

—3. 17.

Col. 1. 13.

Rom. 8.

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Col. 1. 13.

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3. Thus, in fine, the Scriptures expressly teach us, calling him, not only at large, *the Son of God*; but more Emphatically, *God's Beloved Son*, his Dear Son, his Own Son, *The First-born of every Creature*; and, (as in the *Text*, agreeable to our Belief in our Creed) *the only begotten of the Father*, even his only Son.

II. The meaning whereof, we receive not in the *Eunomian* Interpretation, as if the Father only begat him, nor in the *Socinian* sense, as if *Christ* hereby was only denoted to be the Chief and best beloved of God's Sons; but in the *Primitive Orthodox* sense of the Church, as signifying him to be the *Son of God* in such a peculiar manner, as never any one besides him was or ever shall be; having not only a *Right*, but a *Peculiar Right* to this Title.

1. The Right of *Christ* to this extraordinary Relation to God, is founded in Scripture, on, 1. His *Miraculous Generation*; He being conceived by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin, therefore was that Holy Thing, so Born, called the *Son of God*. 2. His *Extraordinary Sanction and Commission* from God, rendering him worthy and capable of such Appellation far beyond all others, who upon the account of the Authority and Power derived from him, have been called the *Children of the most high*, and said to have been *Gods*. 3. His *Resurrection*, whereby he became *The First-born from the Dead*; and being begotten hereby to another Life, of him it is therefore said Prophetically by God himself, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; upon which account, even others are called the *Children of God*, being the *Children of the Resurrection*. And, 4. His actual inheriting, as *Heir* of all, whereby he

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is observed by the *Apostle*, to have obtained a more excellent Name, and to be made so much better than the *Angels*. For unto which of the *Angels* said he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? and again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.

2. But the Peculiarity of Christ's Right to the Title of such Relation (whereby he is God's only Son, exclusive of all others) is founded wholly upon his Divine Generation; wherewith God begat him, as a Father doth a Son, of the like Nature with himself, so that he is God as well as Man.

There being no other sense wherein with any propriety of speaking Christ may be affirmed to be God's [only Son;] and wherein the Ancient Universal Church hath ever profess'd to believe this his Relation with respect to God; it being evident.

1. That he had an antient Being or Subsistence before his Conception by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, who then came down from Heaven, yet was also actually in Heaven; was before Abraham; before St. John the Baptist; in Glory before the World was; and in the beginning, not of the Gospel times only, but from the Beginning, before all Time, even from all Eternity, he is said to be with God.

Whence, also, it is no less evident, that this Being which Christ then had, antecedently to his Conception, was not any Created, but

2. Essentially Divine, by which he was truly and properly God. To whom the Appellations, Attributes, Operations and Worship peculiar to God are frequently in Scripture applyed. The Word being said to be God; and God said to have been manifested in the Flesh: His Eternity was proclaimed by that Voice from Heaven affirming him to be Alpha and Omega, the first and the Last. His immensity of Presence

The Divinity of Christ.

Jo. 3. 13.
—8. 58.
—1. 15.
—17. 5.
—1. 1.

Jo. 1. 1.
1 Tim. 3.
16:
Rev. 1. 11.

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sence and Power was implied in that Promise that he himself made to his Disciples of being with them whenever they met in his Name; and to the end of the World. His Immutability is signified in that Eulogie given him by the Apostle to the Hebrews, calling him Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. His infinite Wisdom and Knowledge is confess'd in that ingenuous acknowledgment of his Disciples of their being sure that he knew all things; in whom are said to be hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge; and to be the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God; and in Sum, whatever Attribute or Perfection God hath, the same is imputed to be in him, all things that the Father hath, being affirm'd to be his, who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God. Therefore by him are all things said to be Created, and to be upheld by the word of his Power, and He to do those Miracles that no Man can do except God be with him, Raising the Dead to Life, by his own Power, laying down his Life to take it up again; not needing that any should testifie of Man, for he knew what was in Man; foreseeing and foretelling his own sufferings; seeing and knowing God, whom none besides him hath seen; Pardoning Sins, and Conferring Salvation: Who therefore was justly proclaimed to be worthy to receive— Honour, and Glory, and Blessing, and commanded to be Worshipped, and called upon by Prayer, (such Invocation being intended to distinguish Christians from Infidels) and in whose Name we are accordingly Baptized, together with that of the Father, and the Holy Ghost. Of all which things as no Creature can be capable, so neither can a jealous God be conceiv'd to communicate or suffer any One, much less All of them, in the most ample Degree, to be ascribed to any who is not God,

Mat. 18. 20.
 —28. 20.
 Heb. 13. 8.
 Jo. 16. 30.
 Col. 2. 3.
 1 Cor. 1. 24.
 Jo. 16. 15.
 Phil. 2. 6.
 Col. 1. 16.
 Jo. 3. 2.
 —10. 17.
 18.
 —2. 25.
 —6. 46.
 Rev. 5. 12.
 Heb. 1. 6.
 1 Cor. 1. 2.
 Mat. 28. 19.

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as our Lord manifestly hence appeareth to have been in that Being he had before his Conception. Which *Divine Being*, it is further clear, 3. *That he receiveth it as communicated to him, from the Father : He and the Father being One*, (even one in Nature) and yet he coming out from God. And therefore in the *Nicene Creed* is he styled *God of Gods, Light of Light, very God of very God*; Importing no Difference in Essence, but Distinction in Origination. The *Father* having that Essence of himself from none, which *Christ* hath not of himself, but from the *Father*. It being necessary to suppose such a Communication of the *Divine Nature*, common to Three Persons, to avoid multiplicity in the One God-head. And which *Communication* we, also are to believe is, 4. *A proper Generation*. It being a vital Production of the same Nature, fully representing the Original whence it is produced; *Christ* being called *the brightness of God's* Heb. 1. 3. *Glory, and the express Image of his Person*. Yea, and which is a far more proper Generation than any Natural Generation: The Identity of Nature being most perfect, and communicated without Derivation or Decision; without Beginning and Succession; and without Division and Multiplication. And therefore we are sure, Lastly, *That the Divine Nature was never communicated in the same manner to any Person but Christ*; and consequently, in respect hereof, he is properly and perfectly *God's only Son*. Every other *Divine Production* being either by *Creation*, as all *Creatures* are; whereby a Being is received from God infinitely distant from, and unequal and unlike to the *Divine Essence*; or by *Adoption*, as *Good Men* are; which Filiation is of a Kind distinct, and different from this; or by *Procession*, as the *Holy Ghost* is, whereby

tho' the Essence be the same which is Communicated, yet there is a difference in the Communication; the Son being God by Generation, and the Holy Ghost by Procession; which is never termed a Generation, because derived from both the Father and the Son; and therefore is the Holy Ghost never called the Son but the gift of God; Jesus Christ, exclusive of all other Persons, being thus the only Son of God.

Act. 8. 30.

The Truth and Meaning of which part of this Article having been now explained; we proceed to consider, also, as was proposed,

III. The Use influenced by our belief hereof, in the following particulars.

The merit
of Christ's
suffering.

1. Hence we confirm our Belief of the Efficacy and Meritoriousness of the Doings and Sufferings of Christ for Man's Redemption. For the distance by Sin was so great between Offended God and Fallen Man, that it was not the Ability and Worth of any Created Being that could undertake the Expiation, and satisfy Divine Justice in the behalf of Mankind.

1 Pet. 1. 18.

We know, saith St. Peter, That we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold; (the wrath of God and Death Eternal, were not, it seems, then to be bought off with Money.) Nor was it, as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarketh, by the Blood

Heb. 9. 12.

of Goats and Calves that Sin could be expiated, the sacrificing whereof, was of no further avail than as relating to the Death of Christ prefigured thereby. And we might very reasonably doubt how the blood of him, who had no other Nature than that of Man, could take away the Sins of other Men; who could have neither Merit nor Power to save himself from a Contagion and Mischief that was Universal, and had infected the whole Race of Mankind. Whose single Death would be no

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valuable Compensation for the Death of *All* the Sinners in the World; and much less would it be so for the *Eternal* Death of such Sinners. Neither could any Power but that of God be sufficient to conquer Death and Hell, and save from spiritual Enemies, and extend such Salvation over all the Earth, through all successive Ages, to the end of time, and consummation of all things. But since we believe that *Jesus Christ* is God's only Son, it may reasonably be imagined, that the infinite Dignity of the Person Suffering must needs add an immense value to such his sufferings, and by so doing must make them more than adequate to the guilt of all Mankind. For as it was the extreme aggravation of our Sin, that it was committed against God: so must it be equally an enhancement of our satisfaction that it is made by God. Nothing being so proper, and so available to make an *honourable* amend and satisfaction to the Justice of God for the sins of all Mankind, as the voluntary Obedience and Sufferings of Humane Nature in a Person of so great Dignity and Dearness to God as his Eternal and Entirely beloved Son; who made (by his one Oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for all the Sins of the whole World. Who, then, shall lay any thing to the Charge on God's Elect? It is God that justifieth; Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that dyed, -- whose Sacrifice was meritorious and accepted for us, in regard his Blood was the Blood of God, by which we are purged from all Sin.

In the Of-
fice for the
Communi-
Rom. 8.
33.

Act. 26: 18
1 Joh. 1: 7.

2. This Teaches us the Ground and Encouragement of paying Divine Worship and Service to *Jesus Christ*. Honouring the Son even as we Honour the Father, because of the same Essence and Equal in Majesty

Christ to be
Worshipped

with him; being *Omniscient* to hear and mind us; *Omnipotent* to help and save us; and immenly *Good* to Own and Compassionate, and Accept, and Reward readily and throughly. In our Adorations of whom we adore the One True God. Heb. 1. 6. Whom *Angels* are commanded to *Worship*, and at Phil. 2. 10. whose *Name every Knee* is to *Bow*, of things in *Heaven*, and things in *Earth*, and things under the *Earth*; Rev. 5. 13. and to whom *Blessing, Honour, Glory and Power* is joyntly and equally ascribed with *God the Father Almighty* by every *Creature*. And, therefore the *Christians* God is the One God of the Universe Col. 3. 17. tho' *Jesus Christ* be worshipt by them; whom believing to be the *Son of God*, we *Worship* right-ly as God.

Humanity dignified by Christ.

3. This further should admonish us of a Behaviour suitable to the Dignity of our Nature and Condition in *Christ*. Who being God, became also Man, even of the very same Nature with the Meanest and most Miserable of our selves. For he passing by the higher Nature of *Angels*, exprefs'd so great a regard and value for *Humanity*, as for its sake to debase himself, though the only Son of God, to assume and advance it into a Conjunction with the *Divine Nature*, hereby setting it above Contempt in any others, and representing it worthy our utmost regard and care in our selves.

For, however subject every Man is to Defects and Mischances, which are apt to expose him to the Contempt of others, especially of weak and vulgar Minds: yet is no Man really despicable, being interested in that Nature, so singularly Honour'd and carefully Regarded by God himself. Which surely imparteth so much of Dignity to the meanest, so much of Worth to the basest, and so much of somewhat hopeful to the most Degenerate,

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nerate, as for ever to exempt him from being absolutely scorn'd and slighted, or looked on as an abject or forlorn Wretch unworthy of Consideration; because this cannot be without reflecting Contempt on God, who though mighty *despiset* Job 36. 5. *not any*; and on Christ, whose Nature the *Humane* also is; and for whose Sake, and after whose Judgment and Example it ought, therefore, to be regarded and respected wherever observed by us.

We also *our selves* being interested herein, and related hereby to the Deity, tho' we may not be proud, yet we ought to be sensible of so undeserved an Honour, and think the better of and take more care for our selves, for having been so well thought of, and greatly cared for by God; aspiring to live like our selves, some way suitable to so honourable an Alliance; affecting nothing Mean or Sordid, or doing any thing Base or Wicked; whereby we should greatly undervalue our selves, much disparage our Glorious Relation, and appear unworthy the Dignity bestowed upon our Nature.

4. *This also, Excites and Directs our Gratitude Obliging to towards God; in admiration of his Love towards thankful- us, in parting with, and sending such an One, so ness. High and Excellent in himself, so dearly beloved by him, into the World, to save Sinners so mean and inconsiderable, so guilty and obnoxious to Divine Vengeance, so altogether unworthy of Grace and Favour, and so very unwilling to receive what is so freely offer'd, and so greatly wanted. In this (surely in this) was manifested the 1 Jo. 4. 9. Love of God towards us. And for this is our utmost 10. Love and Thankfulness due to him. Yea again,*

5. *This may strengthen our Hope and Confidence in Hpe. God for Relief in all our Needs; reasonably presuming*

Rom. 8.
32.

ming, that He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us, will not easily deny us any thing, but with him will also freely give us all things. Such a Pledge of Love may justly warrant our Dependance, and raise our expectation, and may support and comfort us in all our Afflictions and Distresses, it being impossible for him to be Cruel, who hath been so extraordinary Kind to us; or to refuse us Pence, who hath freely enrich'd us with Patrimony.

Charity.

1 Jo. 4. 11.

This should enlarge our Charity towards all our Brethren, we being under so great an Obligation, and after so glorious an Example. Beloved, saith St. John, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. God's Kindness to us being both our Reward and Rule, whereby we are Encouraged and Instructed in our Duty. In Gratitude to, and in Imitation of him, we ought to stick at no kindness that lies in our power to do one another. And,

Obedience.

1 Jo. 4. 12.

Lastly, This should confirm us in an hearty submission and cheerful Obedience to all the Laws of the Gospel; since both Exemplified and Promulged by the Son of God himself, living what he Taught, and by his Example and Message, recommending to us the Practice thereof, as much as was possible. By his Example it appearing, that all things that are required of us, are worthy of the most excellent Natures, being not below the Practice of the Son of God himself. And by his Message, that our more than ordinary respect and observance is due thereto, as the most Important, being imparted to us, not, as formerly, by the Dictate of Natural Reason, or by the Instruction of Prophets, or by the Ministry of Angels, but by the only Son of God; who, after several repeated Notices from Heaven, for the Good of Mankind, hath in these last days, once for

for all, spoken by his Son, not doubting of our Reven-
 rence towards him; and therefore ought we to give
 the more earnest heed to the things which we have
 heard, from him, lest at any time we should let them

slip. For if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast,
 and every transgression and disobedience received a
 just recompence of reward, how shall we escape, if we
 neglect so great Salvation; which at the first began to
 be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by
 them that heard him? And if he that despised Moses

Law, died (as the Apostle affirmeth) without mercy,
 --- Of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he
 be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the
 Son of God; and hath counted the Blood of the Cove-
 nant wherewith he was Sanctified, an unholy thing,
 and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace. Such
 an aggravation of all Impiety under the Gospel
 Dispensation, is the disbelief of our Jesus being
 the Son of God; and on these Grounds, in this Sense,
 and to such Purposes are we intended to profess
 this our Belief hereof, and for which end, con-
 clude we, with our Church, addressing God in
 the Words of one of her wholesome Collects.

Almighty God, who hast given us thine only begot-
 ten Son, to take our Nature upon him; Grant
 that we being regenerate, and made thy Chil-
 dren by Adoption and Grace, may be daily re-
 newed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our
 Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with
 thee, and the same Spirit, ever one God, world
 without end. Amen

Collect for
 Christmas
 day.

SERMON X.
ON THE
Second Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Acts x. 36.

— *He is Lord of all.*

Chrift's Relation, with respect to God (even his *Filiation*) was the Argument of our last Discourse. His Relation, with respect to Us (even his *Dominion*) whereby also the Person of our Redeemer is described in this Article of our Creed, is therefore to be the Subject of this; *Dominion* being the necessary consequent of *Filiation*; the only Son of God, as Heir, being Lord of all; and others tho' bearing also the Name of Sons, yet compared to him, being but *Servants of God*.

This Doctrine the Apostle St. Peter delivers in the Text, being part of his Sermon to Cornelius and others assembled with him to Learn the Truths

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Truths of Christianity; and this we profess to Believe in the remaining part of this *Article of our Creed*. For the Illustrating whereof, inquire we into the *Grounds and Reasons* whereon this Title of *Our Lord* becomes due unto *Christ*; the *Nature and Extent* of that Authority signified thereby; and the *Influence* to be reasonably expected from our Profession of such *Belief*.

I. *Inquire we into the Grounds and Reasons whereon this Title of [Our Lord] becomes due unto Christ*; Representing the Agreeableness of the *Notion* of that word to him, in whatever *Capacity* we can consider him; as being duly grounded upon all the imaginable Foundations of just *Dominion*.

1. *According to the Notion of the Word*, it is a Title of Superiority; and is proper to our Saviour whom God, is said, to have highly exalted, and given him a Name above every Name; even whatever Name whereby Superiority is denoted, belonging to him in the very highest Degree and meaning thereof, as to the Sovereign Lord of all. Who is our Prince and Governour, and his Throne said to be for ever and ever: Our Master and Head of his Family; of whom the whole Family, [which is his Church, whether Triumphant in Heaven, or Militant here on Earth] is named; Christ as a Son, being over his own House, whose House are we, saith the Apostle; to whom, therefore, he must be accounted Lord and Master, yea, our Owner; whose proper Goods and Vassals we are, entirely subject to his disposal, he being the Lord that bought us. He is also our Teacher; [ἡγεμὼν] the One Master, or Guide in Doctrine, to Dictate to our Understanding, and to over-rule our Practice. He is said to be our Captain and Leader, whose

Christ's Dominion.

Phil. 2. 9.

Heb. 1. 8.

Eph. 3. 15.

Heb. 3. 6.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

Mat. 23.

10.

steps

1 Pet. 2. 21. *steps we are to follow, being called hereunto, and Lifted under his Banner, even to fight our way through*
 Act. 14. 22. *much Tribulation into the Kingdom of God. And, finally,*
 1 Pet. 2. 25. *ly, He is the Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, even the Lord and Overseer of our Spiritual and most*
 Col. 1. 18. *Important Interest; In all things having the pre-eminence, and in all Notions and Senses of Lordship, being our Supreme Lord. Who, further is so*

2. *In whatsoever capacity we consider his Person. For as he is God not only peculiar Names Importing Dominion are assigned him; being called the Lord*
 Jer. 23. 6. [*Jehovah*] *our Righteousness in the Old Testament,*
 1 Cor. 15. *and the Lord [*κύριος*] from Heaven in the New;*
 47. *but also peculiar Acts of Power and Government, (such as Creation, Conservation and Disposal of*
 1 Tim. 6. *all things) belong to him, who is by Nature the*
 15. *blessed, and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord*
 Act. 5. 31. *of Lords. As he is also Man, Him hath God exalted with his Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour;*
 by Gift and Delegation, in regard to his Merit, having conferred upon him an Universal Dominion over all things; and commanded all the House
 —2. 36. *of Israel to know assuredly, that the same Jesus whom they had Crucified, was both Lord and Christ; having raised him from the dead, he set him at his own*
 Eph. 1. 20, *Right Hand in the heavenly places, far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. As God and Man, United in one Mediatour, it hath been observed that Lord is peculiarly his Title in the New Testament, as God is of the Father; it being only by virtue of this Union that the Man Christ Jesus was capable of so great Exaltation. As Jesus our Saviour, he manifested his Dominion over Sin and Death, as Prince, besides whom as there is no Saviour,*
 our,

our, so is he, what hereby he inseparably merits, *Ua. 43. 11.*
 our Lord. Yea, and as *Christ*, he was Anointed to *Lu. 2. 11.*
 Dominion, and separated to Rule as *Prophet,*
Priest, and *King*; and therefore proclaimed to be
Christ the Lord: In every respect, however consid-
 der'd in his Person, by *Nature* and *Office*, appear-
 ing to be so. Yea, and finally,

3. This appeareth to be duly grounded upon all the
 imaginable foundations of a *Legal Dominion*, whether
Natural or *Instituted*, according to the standing
 Rules of Justice and Equity. *Christ* having a *Nat-*
ural Title of being the *Lord of all*, from his being
 the *Almighty God*; of ability to Govern and do
 whatsoever he pleaseth, whom nothing can resist,
 all things being given into his hands: And from his *Jo. 13. 3.*
 having Created and still Preserving our Beings,
 both *Natural* as *Men*, and *Spiritual* as *Christians*, *Act. 17. 28.*
 in whom we believe and move, and have our being; *Rev. 4. 11.*
 who therefore is worthy to receive *Glory*, and *Hon-*
our, and *Power*, — He hath moreover, an *Institu-* *Jo. 17. 2.*
ted Right to the Title of *Lord* over us, by free Do-
 nation from *God the Father*, who hath given him pow-
 er over all flesh; and in a peculiar manner over
 those gracious Souls that sincerely obey him; by
 his own Conquest of our Enemies unto whom we
 were enslaved; He spoiling *Principalities* and *Pow-* *Col. 2. 15.*
ers, and making a shew of them openly, triumphing over *Lu. 1. 74.*
 them, that we being delivered out of the hands of our
 Enemies, might serve him without fear. The same
 Title he has, by a dear Purchase; who hath bought us
 with a Price, from our selves and from *Misery*. *1 Cor. 6. 29.*
 Upon which account we are no longer our own, in
 Gratitude and Justice being his that Ransom'd us
 from Captivity, and Redeemed us from Punish-
 ment. He is our Lord by *Merit* and *Desert*, *Christ's*
Exaltation being the just Reward of his Perfor-
 mances.

mances. And because (as it was prophesied of him) *Iſa. 53. 12. he poured out his Soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the Great, and he did divide Heb. 2. 9. the spoil with the strong.* And so (the Apostle saith) we see Jesus, --for the sufferings of Death, Crowned with Glory and Honour. He further is justly our Lord by Hire and Reward; offering us Great Wages for our unprofitable Service to him, and encouraging our *Rom. 2. 6. small Pains, and weak Endeavours, with vast Rewards* *1 Cor. 15. and certain Gains; who will render to every Man according to his Works;* so that no Man's Labour can *Rom. 6. 22. be in vain in the Lord; who being freed from Sin, and made Servants to God, shall have their fruit unto Holiness, and the end everlasting Life;* and great will the Reward of such be in Heaven. However, Christ, is *Gal. 3. 27. also, our Lord by our own Election and Compass;* into whom we have been Baptized; and to whose Service we are thereby solemnly Dedicated, manfully to fight under his Banner against the common Enemies of his Glory and our Salvation, Sin, the World, and the Devil; Renouncing all other Powers that would Usurp Lordship over us; wearing his Livery, and taking his Yoke upon us. So that in what ever Notion we conceive of this Relation; according to whatever Capacity we consider our Saviour; upon whatever just Ground we can imagine Dominion to be founded, we are necessitated to believe Jesus Christ, God's only Son, to be also, our Lord.

Office for
publick
Baptism.

Mat. 11.
29.

The Sub-
jects of
Christ's
Dominion.

II. The Nature and Extent of which Authority hereby signified, will be fully explain'd by considering also, Over what Subjects, in what Acts, and to what Duration Christ's Dominion is exercised by him as thus a Lord.

1. The Subjects of whom, are every Creature, as he is God, and with respect to his absolute and

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Independent Dominion, He being Lord of *All*; and his Church, whether *Militant* here on Earth, or *Triumphant* in Heaven, as he is *Christ*, the Mediator, with respect to that Dominion delegated to him from *God the Father*. He being peculiarly *Our Lord*; to restrain and defeat his and our Enemies; to Protect, Assist, and Reward his faithful Servants; Who hath all things put under his Feet, whether in Heaven, where he is above all Principalities and Powers; being Worshipped by Angels, and employing them at his pleasure, who are all Ministering Spirits, sent forth to Minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation; and Ador'd by Glorify'd Saints there, ascribing Salvation to God, who sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb: Or on the Earth, where all Nations are given unto him for his Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his Possession: Yea, in whose Hand are the Keys of Hell and Death, with power to bind the Dragon, that Old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, that he shall deceive the Nations no more; all things being subjected to him, He being only excepted which did put all things under him.

2. The Acts wherein Christ's Dominion is chiefly exercised are Legislation and Jurisdiction, by him administred, partly in his Life on Earth, and partly after his Death, from Heaven.

In his Life on Earth; tho' in the meanest and most subjected outward appearance, yet in his own Person did he manifest himself to be Lord of all. Assuming to himself power to forgive Sins; to Abrogate, to Alter, and to Enact Laws; asserting himself to be greater than the Temple, and that the Son of Man was Lord, even of the Sabbath Day; Instituting Sacraments; Teaching the Doctrine of the Kingdom; Gathering Disciples; Ordaining Apostles, adding

1 Cor. 15.

27.

Eph. 1. 21.

Heb. 1. 6.

14.

Rev. 7. 9.

10.

Pf. 2. 8.

Rev. 1. 18.

—20. 2, 3.

1 Cor. 15.

27.

The Acts of
his Domi-
nion.

Mat. 12. 6,

8.

adding *Seventy* assistants to them; and laying the Foundation of the Christian Church, by his *Miracles* convincing that he was the Son of God, Eph. 1. 22. and Lord both of all Nature, and Head over all things to the Church.

Acts 2. 24. After his Death, He Rose again by his own Power, having loosed the Pains of Death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it; He manifested himself to his Apostles, and many of his Disciples; he gave Commission to his Apostles to go and Preach to all Nations; and instructed them in the Nature of his Kingdom and their Ministry. After which he ascended up into Heaven, which no

Jo. 3. 13. Man ever did besides him that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven; whence he sendeth down the Holy Ghost; and, being now possess'd of Universal Power, he maketh new Offices, new Laws, and executeth Judgment accordingly. He Revealeth more clearly and fully the great Mystery of the Gospel; beginneth his Intercession at the Right hand of God the Father Almighty; taketh in the Gentiles and all Nations, even unto the ends of the Earth. By him all Petitions, Thanksgivings, Praises, and Services are presented to the Father. By him all Pardons and special Blessings are dispensed and disposed of; and all the Promises are perform'd by him, in his Name and through his Merit; no Man coming unto the Father but by him, nor any Service being accepted but for his sake. This is the settled Administration of Christ's Dominion to the end of this World when he shall come once more to Judge it; to whom all Judgment is committed by the Father, that all Men should Honour the Son, even as they Honour the Father.

Jo. 5. 22,
23.
The Duration of
Christ's Dominion.

3. The Duration of Christ's Dominion. As it had not

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not the same Beginning, so neither will it have the same Continuance: For as he was *Invested* with part at his *Incarnation*, when he came into the World from God, and *Rewarded* with more at his *Glorification*, when he went out of the World to God; so when his work shall be finish'd in the World, and his Enemies subdued, and Kingdom compleated, then will that part of his *Dominion*, which is his *Mediatorial* and spiritual Kingdom on Earth cease; who is only to *Reign* till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet, -- And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. But yet his Kingdom, which he shall have purchased and rescued from his Enemies will be his Everlasting Reward; and as we are promised to *Reign* with him, and to be for ever with the Lord, so will he continue to exercise a Dominion over his Redeemed ones for ever, of whose Kingdom there shall be no end: His Dominion being an Everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away; and his Kingdom that, which shall not be destroyed. It only remains now, that we consider.

III. Lastly, The Influence reasonably expected from our Profession of the Belief hereof; and that manifestly is to admonish us of that Behaviour due and required from us towards Christ [our Lord.] To Moderate and Temper the Dominion of all Superiours over their Inferiours; to encourage and excite the Subjection of all Inferiours to their Superiours; to promote Love and Forbearance among all Degrees of Men; to support our Hope under Difficulties and Discouragements; to Teach the right Value and Esteem for our Profession. For Christ being thus Our Lord, our Belief hereof ought,

The Duty
of Christ's
Servants.

1. To Admonish us of that Behaviour due and required from us towards him; which is what becometh, and is the bounden Duty of Servants, in which relation we own our selves towards Christ, by confessing him to be *Our Lord* (one Relative inferring another, and including its Correlative,) which obligeth to many considerable Duties, as,
1. To own no other Lord in Competition with him, in Opposition to him, or otherwise any way than in Subordination and Subserviency to him. Because (as *Our Lord* himself gives the Reason) *no Man can serve, [as he ought] Two Masters, [being of different or contrary Interests] we cannot serve God and Mammon.* And therefore he also saith, *Who-soever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple.* Further 2. *We are hereby prohibited the pleasing of Men in any thing that may displease Christ; having no other Supreme Lord, and he only being Ours, whose Will and Pleasure ought to be the Rule of all our Actions, whereto we are to attend and submit with a chearful unconcernedness however others may resent it from us: For we are not the Servants of Men, and have but one Master to please, whom we are bound to endeavour to please in every thing. And as we must not do our Duty only to ingratiate our selves into the good Opinion of Men, so must we not neglect it for the feared Displeasure of any Man.* For if, saith St. Paul, *I yet pleased Men, [were so ambitious of their good Will and Word, as sinfully to sooth or comply with them] I should not [in effect] be the Servant of Christ, [being herein unfaithful to his Authority, and my Obligation].* And, elsewhere instructing such in their Duty, he bids them, *whatsoever they do, to do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto Men:*
- Knowing,

Knowing that of the Lord they shall receive the reward of the Inheritance, for they serve the Lord Christ.

3. We are hereby restrained from self-pleasing; who are not at Liberty, or at our own Disposal as either to our Persons, which are as properly our Lord's as the rest of his Goods; or Actions, which by compact are engaged to his Interest and Service, and for which we expect Wages and Advantage from him. Know ye not, saith the Apostle that ye are not your own: Being not Lords our selves, ^{1 Cor. 6.} but Servants to the Lord Christ; and therefore not ^{19.} to live to our selves, but to him that died for us. We ^{2 Cor. 5.} being not intended to have our own Wills, to ^{15.} please our own Appetites, to gratify our own Desires, to follow our own Fancys, or to regard our own Profit; having no Business or Employment properly our own; undertaking or prosecuting nothing merely as such, or otherwise than as the doing so is subordinate unto or consistent with the Service of our Lord. To Serve him is, or should be all our business; and whether, then, we eat, or ^{1 Cor. 10.} drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the Glory ^{31.} of our Lord, with a formal Reference towards him, and pure Intention to serve him as his Servants. By which Relation we are also oblig'd, 4. To honour and reverence Christ our Lord. In word, speaking well and Honourable of his Name and Service. And in Behaviour, manifesting and inviting to a Respect and Esteem for both. Not enduring others to reflect upon either; and discountenancing and avoiding the Company of such as do so. It being the Duty of as many Servants as are under the Yoke, to count their own Masters worthy of all honour; and also, 5. To imitate the Example of our Lord; as in the Practice of all Virtue and Piety, so especially in the practice of Charity, Humility

- and *Patience*, which are imitable Graces, suited to the Condition of *Servants*; who ought not upon any account to think themselves *greater than their Lord*, or refuse to stoop, at least, to his Condescensions, who was so much above us, and hath given an Example, that we should do as he hath done. It is our Place and Office to follow his Steps, to attend his Person, in all Places and Performances with a Conformity to him. But above all, 6. *We are hereby obliged to obey our Lords Commands in doing and suffering, according to his Pleasure*; whose we all are, and who may do what he will with his own. His *Commands*, therefore, must Govern, and his *Disposals* content us in every instance. What he hath said ought to be our *Law*, not to be disputed or neglected by us, but *Diligently, Faithfully and Cheerfully* to be complied with, and to our Power, performed by us; as otherwise absurdly and in vain calling him *Lord, Lord, knowing that to whom we yield our selves Servants to obey, his Servants we are*. And whatever *Censure* he lays upon us, however treated and employed we are by him, yet it is our parts to *Submit*; to *Confess* and *Amend* our Faults, to acknowledge his *Righteous dealing* with us, and to intreat his *Reconciliation* to us, without *Complaint* or farther *Provocation*; not so much as *answering again*, as the *Apostle* exhorts *Servants*. In all these Instances, *Christ* being our *Lord*, it becomes and concerns us to approve our selves to be his *Good and Faithful Servants*, whom he may judge worthy to be admitted into the joys of our *Lord* at last. Hence also,
2. Let all *Superiours* be admonished to moderate and temper their *Dominion* over those *Subjected* thereto; since the *Son of God* is the common *Lord* of all, and all are alike *Servants* to him, with whom there is
- Jo. 13. 15. 16.
- Lu. 6. 46.
- Rom. 6. 16.
- Tit. 2. 9.
- Mat. 25. 21.
- The Duty of Superiours.
- Eph. 6. 9

no respect of Persons, for whom, and under whom Rulers Govern, and to whom they are accountable. Whence St. Paul admonisheth Masters to give unto their Servants that which is just and equal, Col. 4. 1. knowing that they also have a Master in Heaven. And

3. Let all Inferiours hence, chearfully submit to the Powers set over them of whatever kind; as being Ordained by God and invested with the Authority of our Common Lord, to be owned and revered in them by us, in obeying whom we are assured that we serve the Lord Christ. And, again,

4. Let all exercise Love and Forbearance towards one another. As hence appearing to be Fellow Servants to one Lord; in just respect to whom, (since he loveth Order and Peace, and hath recommended them by his own Practice and Doctrine, kindness and mutual Love) we ought, as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all Men; studying to be quiet and to do our own business. Without pragmatically intermeddling, or harshly censuring and judging one another. Leaving every Man to his own Master, before whom he must stand or fall by his own Service; and to whom alone belongeth the right of Decision, which we cannot meddle with, without Arrogance and bold Encroachment upon our Lords authority.

5. Let us learn hence to bear up and support our own Hope and Confidence, under all Difficulties and Discouragements which we may and shall meet with in our Service from a due sense of that Gracious Lord that presides over, and careth for all his Servants; being able and willing to dispose all things for their Sustenance, Protection, Assistance, and Encouragement, and is rich unto all them that call upon him in keeping of whose Statutes there is great reward;

there being no fear of want to them whom the Lord of all undertaketh to provide for. To conclude,

To value
their Rela-
tion to
Christ.

6. Lastly, Let us hence, also learn to value the Worth and Dignity of this our Relation and Profession. Which exalts us to be Fellow-Servants with Kings and Angels, and equally doth interest us in our Lord's Favour, and giveth us opportunity of making our Fortune thereby for ever. So that there is nothing we have to value our selves upon so much as upon our being the Servants of Christ Jesus our Lord. The which as it is a great Encouragement to the Meanest, so it is no disparagement to the Highest; and whereof whosoever shall be ashamed of him, will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own Glory, and in his Fathers, and of the Holy Angels; even them who proudly disdain to serve him now, he with just and sad vengeance will reject hereafter: Those mine Enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me. From which fatal Doom, Good Lord deliver us!

Lu. 9. 26.

19. 27.

Having thus considered the Name, the Office, and Relation in respect both to God and our selves, whereby the Person of our Redeemer is described in this Second Article of our Creed, we may now recapitulate the true and full sense wherein we are intended to say, I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, viz.

I believe and depend upon it, that the salvation of sinful Man, as it consisteth wholly in a Deliverance from the Guilt and Power and Punishment of Sin, so there hath been sent from God a Saviour with a proffer of such deliverance to us; which was none other than our [Jesus] who was every way such as that his comfortable Name importeth to us, being [The Christ] the Anointed of the Lord to be his true Messiah, our Prophet,

SERMON XI.
ON THE
Third Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Mat. i. 20, 21.

— *That which was Conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost,*
And she shall bring forth a Son, —

*Christ's Hu-
miliation
in his
Incarnati-
on.*

After the Consideration of the *Second Person* in the *Holy Trinity* in respect of his *Person*, the *Order* of our *Creed* and the *Argument* of this *Text* lead us to consider him in respect of his *Humiliation*. Which consisting of *Two Parts*, viz. His *Incarnation* and his *Passion*, the first of these is what we are to make the *Subject* of this *Discourse* being the *Import* of the words now read, containing the *Prophetick History* of our *Saviour's Incarnation*, in both its distinct parts, viz. His *Conception* and *Birth*. Concerning this we profess to believe in the

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the *Third Article* of our *Creed*, namely, *who was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary*. In the Words of the Text, are comprized these Three Particulars.

I. That *Jesus Christ* God's only Son and our Lord, was *Conceived* and *Born*, or brought forth.

II. That his *Conception* was not after the ordinary manner of Men, but solely by the Power and Operation of the *Holy Ghost*; That which is *Conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost*. And,

III. That yet he was produced, agreeable to the Nature of Man, by a proper *Conception* and *Birth* of a Woman, even the *Virgin Mary*; And she shall bring forth a Son. — All which shall be distinctly consider'd, and then reflected on in some Inferences, as may seem most proper and useful to a Christian's Life from such a Belief.

I. *Jesus Christ* Gods only Son, and our Lord, was *Conceived* and *Born*, or brought forth. For of Him ^{The Son.} the Text is meant and to whom the *Article* in our *Creed* evidently refers; (being annexed to the *Article* forgoing, whereof *He* was the Subject) and which is usually thus particularly observed here in opposition to an Ancient Heresy of the *Patripassians*; which asserted, that it was the *Father* that was Incarnate. Therefore tho' we believe that there are Three Persons in one *God-head*, and that the Humane Nature was conjoined with the Divinity, which is the Nature common to them all; yet we also are to Believe, that such Union was made only in the Person of the *Son*, which is the Second Person in the Glorious *Trinity*, who is said to be *that which is Conceived and brought forth*, thereby truly and intirely becoming *Man*. Which is the great *Mystery of Christianity*, various-

ly express'd or imply'd in the *Scriptures*, by particular and proper Appellations, signifying his real
Was Man. *Manhood*; calling him *the Man Christ Jesus*; the
 1 Tim. 2. 5. *Seed of the Woman*; the *Seed of Abraham*; the *Seed*
 Gen. 3. 15. *of David according to the Flesh*; the *Son of Man*;
 Gen. 22. 18. and such *Man* as was *Adam* by whom came *Death*.
 Rom. 1. 3. Attributing also to him the constituent parts of
 1 Cor. 15. 21. *Humanity*; such as a *Body*, that was figured and
 circumscribed as ours, made of like Materials,
 subject to the same Accidents, Infirmities, Necessi-
 ties and Passions, which could not be only a spe-
 ctre, or deluding shape of a Man, (as the *Gnos-
 ticks*, and some other *Hereticks* conceited it) but
 a truly *Humane Body*, as abundantly proved to be
 Lu. 2. 52. so, as ever any was or could be. Which Body was
 — 22. 42. Enlivened by a *Humane Soul*; endued with *Un-
 derstanding* capable of *Learning* and *Improvement*;
 A *Will* subjected to that of God; *Passions* and *Af-
 fections* of Zeal, Pity, Sorrow, Anger, and Love;
 being deficient in no essential part, devoid of no
 Property, exempt from no Inconvenience of Hu-
 mane Nature, (*Sin* only excepted, which is the Cor-
 ruption rather than Original Constitution of our
 Nature) in opposition to *Arius*, and after him
Eunomius, who allowed *Christ* to have nothing of
Man but *Flesh*, to which the *Word* was joyned;
 and *Apollinaris*, that yet more subtilly acknow-
 ledg'd him to assume the *Body* and *Soul*, yet with-
 out the *Mind* or *Spirit* of Man, instead whereof
 only was the *Word* or Divinity.

The man-
 ner there-
 of.

The Manner of this Union, of two so Different
 Natures is not to be determin'd any other wise than
 by *Negation*, so as (for prevention of Error) to
 deny all *Commixion*, or *Confusion*, *Conversion*, or
Transmutation, *Distinction*, *Separation*; And Ex-
 plained by *Comparison*; resembled to the Union of
 Man's

Man's Soul and Body, which being closely United, concur to make up a *Man*, tho' these are two very distinct and different Substances, and both of them capable of separate Existence, yet in a manner, tho' not in degree they are alike Incomprehensible to us. And thus we are Taught in our *Athanasian Creed*, concerning this Mysterious Point, That although Christ be God and Man: Yet he is not two but one Christ; One not by Conversion of the Godhead into Flesh; but by taking of the Manhood into God; One altogether, not by Confusion of Substance, but by Unity of Person: For as the Reasonable Soul and Flesh is one Man, so God and Man is one Christ.

The Reason and Expediency of which Union is grounded on God's Love for us Men, and for our *Salvation*; which required the Divine Nature for its Accomplishment, because of the Infinite Wisdom, Dignity, and Power (beyond what is Humane) necessary to effect it. And yet the concurrence of the Humane Nature was also necessary, because it was *Man* that was wholly interested therein. The Message of Christ was to *Man*, who could not bear the Presence of God, but veil'd with his own likeness, in which alone Righteousness could be exemplified to him, from which God was to have Satisfaction, whereby he had been offended by Sin. Hereby our Saviour might be in a Possibility to undergo Death, without which no Remission for Sin could be had; and might be capacitated to personate a Mediator, (which is a Middle Person, to be equally interested in both Parties, between whom he is to Mediate) and for this purpose, hereby might be tender of our Good, and sensible of our Needs. Finally, God might hereby manifest his Love, and tender Mercy towards us, in that he sent his only begotten Son into the World, God becoming

1 Jo. 4. 1.

Man,

Man, for *Man's* sake; and no other but *God* being capable to help him. In such *Manner*, and for such *Reasons*, was *Jesus Christ*, the *only Son of God*. Incarnate, and became proper *Man*, being both *Conceived* and *Born* by an *Humane Production*. And yet it is further to be asserted,

*Christ Con-
ceived by
the Holy
Ghost.*

II. *That he was not Conceived after the Ordinary manner of Men, by the Help and Operation of Man, but solely by the Power of the Holy Ghost. — That which is Conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost: Or as in our Creed, By the Holy Ghost. To whom not the Action, but the Efficient Cause only of that Action is attributed. For tho' we profess to believe that Christ was Conceived by the Holy Ghost; yet not that the Holy Ghost did Conceive Him, which the Virgin only did, by the Power and Operation of the Holy Ghost. So that without the Concurrence of any Man, (yet not without the Operation of the Holy Ghost) Christ was Conceived of the Substance of a Woman only. Joseph was his Reputed, but God only his Real Father even as he was Man. Therefore (said the Angel to his Mother) that Holy Thing, which shall be Born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. This Joseph was fully satisfied of by immediate Revelation, and the Blessed Virgin by her own Conscience, and it was attested to the Holy Apostles by the Miracles of our Lord, insomuch that no Adversary did ever Impeach them of Imposture for it; and it is so perspicuously and fully asserted in the Gospels, that nothing can be certainly known thence, if this Truth be not.*

Gal. 4. 4.

Lu. 1. 35.

*In what
manner.*

The manner of the Holy Ghost's Operation herein is described by the Angel to the Virgin in two particular Actions: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;

thee. The coming of the Holy Ghost upon her, was (as a Learned Man observes) in the Gift of the Prophecie whereby she was both informed of the very Instant when the Conception was wrought, and also more fully of the Myſtery of the Incarnation than before; and in order to prepare and Sanctifie ſo much of her Fleſh and Blood, or Seed, as to Conſtitute the Body of our Saviour. And the Power of the higheſt overſhadowing was the Operating Power, ſupplying the want of the Vigour and Embraces of the Maſculine Parent; being a Modest Phraſe whereby the Hebrews expreſſed ſuch Act; and of Monition here to bound Curioſity, and forbid further Inquiry into what the Almighty Wiſdom hath thought fit to overſhadow, and veil from our Eyes, as it were, with a Cloud.

The Reasonableneſs and Ground of ſuch Operation ſeems more evident and eaſie to apprehend; from its fitneſs to be attributed to Him only, to whom commonly all Extraordinary and moſt Eminent Works of God are Aſcribed. To take away all ſuſpicion of Sin in Chriſt's Perſon, being Sanctified hereby from the Womb; capacitated to Unite the Humane with the Divine Nature, that he might become a Saviour from Sin, and be Conſecrated to his Great Offices, and further Teſtified to be the Son of God, and that by another manner of Generation than by this, which is therefore appropriated to the Holy Ghost only; ſince He that was not Conceived in the common way of Men, muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed to be ſomething more than Man.

In this Manner then, and for ſuch Reaſons, was the Conception of our Lord, in an Extraordinary way, effected without Man, by the Power of the

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Harm. in
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Reasons.

the *Holy Ghost* only. Yet (as is further to be asserted)

Of the *Virgin Mary*.

He was produced, agreeable to the Nature of Man, by a Proper Conception, and Birth of a Woman; and she shall bring forth a Son, viz. She of whom the Angel spake, who had Conceived by the *Holy Ghost*, mention'd in our Creed both by her Name and State, even the *Virgin Mary*, including her Sex, which our Text only expresseth, [viz. She] implying that our Saviour had a proper *Humane Descent* from a Woman, whose Name was *Mary*, by Condition a *Virgin*.

Christ's Descent was properly *Humane*, being entitled (as every other Man is) to a Mother, by a Conception and Birth of her, which is the whole Progress of a *Humane Generation*; comprehending his Formation, as well as Nutrition and Augmentation of her very Substance; and his Nativiry, and separation thence in fulness of time. And accordingly is he Styled the Fruit of her Womb; and her Womb said to bear him; and she found to be with Child of him; and to bring forth her first born Son; and therefore called the Mother of our Lord; All which expressions denote the Humanity of his Generation, tho' not *Humanely Generated*; and that as Man, he had a proper Mother, tho' without any Man for his Father. He was Born of a Woman; That which was conceived in her, of the *Holy Ghost*, She being said to bring forth as her Son, as consanguineous and related to Mankind by her. His Humanity not being immediately Created (as that of our First Parents) but properly Generated and Born (not through or only in, but) of a Woman, without mention of any Man; that as by Woman Man Fell, so by her was he restored;

the

Lu. 1. 41.

— 11. 27.

Mat. 1. 18.

Lu. 2. 7.

— 1. 43.

Gal. 4. 4.

the Seed of Woman herein breaking the Serpents Head. Gen. 3. 15.

Her Name was *Mary*; Common, with her, (even at that time, as well as since) to many others. Wherein nothing of Peculiar Excellency, or particular application arising from its Origination, seems (as some would have it) to be intended; or any thing more than to denote that Singular Person, known to be *espoused unto Joseph*. Of whom little more hath been discovered, save, what by Observation and Deduction is Learnt, that she Lineally descended from the Tribe of *Judah* and Family of *David*; which is all of certainty we know concerning *who she was*. Only,

Her Condition informing us what she was, tells us she was a *Virgin*; a Recluse, who perhaps had seldom seen, or to be sure had never known a Man. It being of such an one that the *Messias* was promised by God, and expected by the People of God before and under the Law, to be *Conceived and Born*. And therefore was he purposely styled *the Seed of the Woman*, rather than of the *Man* or *Both*, God seeming willing to have it understood, that it should be in a more peculiar manner Her's; and that tho' the Man also should reap benefit by him, yet he should not contribute to the Production of Him. He was as *the Promised Seed*, to be Born after a Miraculous manner, and to be the Son of a Woman, not of a Man, and consequently it might be of a *Virgin*. Which (to put it out of all doubt) God especially foretels by his own Prophet *Jeremy*; *The Lord hath Created a New Thing on the Earth, a Woman shall compass a Man*; but most plainly by *Isaiab*: *Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son*. -- And such was this *Mary* the Mother of our Lord, who tho' *espoused unto Joseph*, before

Lu. 1. 34.

Gen 3. 15.

Jer. 31. 22.

Is. 7. 14.

Mat. 1. 18.

— 24. before they came together she was found with Child of
 — 25. the Holy Ghost. And tho' Joseph (as the Angel of the
 Lord had bidden him) took unto him his wife; yet it
 is expressly added, that he knew her not, till she had
 brought forth her first born Son, so that Jesus was
 Born, as well as Conceived of a Virgin. And in re-
 gard to this peculiar eminency and unparallel'd
 Privilege of that Mother; the special Honour
 due unto the Son, and ever paid by her; the San-
 ctity of the Holy Ghost that came upon and over sha-
 dowed her; the singular goodness and Piety of Jo-
 seph to whom she was espoused; the Church hath
 generally believ'd (tho' not as any Article of Faith,
 of absolute necessity to Salvation) that she conti-
 nued in the same Virginity ever afterwards.
 However it seems sufficient, as to the Mystery of
 the Incarnation, that when our Saviour was Con-
 ceived and Born, his Mother was a Virgin.

For this seems requisite in regard to the Purity
 of his humanity, that was to be without sin, and
 therefore without seminal Traduction, clear and
 pure from all sordid mixtures. In regard to the
 Dignity of his Person, whose appearance was to be
 extraordinary, so as to command Attention, beget
 Faith, and procure Reverence towards him. In
 regard to the Divinity of his Nature, who was to be
 received by the World as both the Son of God, and
 Son of Man, and therefore as to be born of a Woman,
 that he might appear to be truly the Son of Man,
 so of a Virgin, that he might be demonstrated to
 be clearly the Son of God. And finally, in particu-
 lar regard to the Personal fitness of our own Bles-
 sed Lord's Mother, who was most agreeably Re-
 lated, and duly Qualified both in Mind and State
 for this very purpose. She being of the Royal
 Line of David her self, and espoused unto Joseph,
 who

who had the same Descent, to which the Promise of the *Messias* belonged. She being *Pure and Holy in disposition of Mind*, as was necessary in her to whom God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity with approbation, would vouchsafe to approach in so near a conjunction. And being *Poor and homely in State of Life*, as was purposely designed for our more profitable Instruction; To teach us, that God does not so much regard the outward Pumps and Appearances of this World, as the inward Frame and Temper of Spirit. To curb the Worldliness of Mens Minds, and confront the Pride and Vanity thereof. To insinuate the Nature of Christ's *Kingdom*, which is not of this World, neither consists in Secular Pomp and Puissance, but in Spiritual Power over the Hearts of Men. To exhibit more conspicuously the Divine Power and Glory, through Christ's Worldly State of Impotency and Baseness. And to Sanctify and Sweeten to us the Inconveniencies and Hardships of Poverty. For which, and the like Reasons, the lowest state of his *Hand-maiden* being happily regarded by God, was our *Blessed Saviour*, who was *Conceived by the Holy Ghost*, also *Born of the Virgin Mary*.

This is a full and plain Account of this great Mystery of the Christian Religion foretold by an Angel in the *Text*, and comprized in this *Article* of our *Creed* in these Three particulars, according whereto, the meaning of our Confessing to Believe is to this purpose, viz. *I believe that Jesus Christ God's only Son, and our Lord was made Man, being Conceived and Born; and I believe that he was so, in an Extraordinary Manner, without Man's help, being Conceived by the Holy Ghost; and I further Believe yet, that he had a Production agreeable to Humane Nature; by a proper Conception and Birth, of a*
Woman

Woman by Name Mary, and by Condition a Virgin; who was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

I proceed now to Reflect on the Premises, in some *Inferences* as may seem most Proper and Useful to a Christians Life from such a *Belief*, and these I shall reduce to these two.

1. That we render God the Glory. And
2. That we reap the Benefit hereof our selves.

To God be
the Glory
of his

Wisdom,

Power.

Justice.

1. *It is meet and necessary that we hence render God the Glory of this great Mystery of our Redemption by the Incarnation of his only Son.* Being a Dispensation full of Divine *Wisdom*, and *Power*, and *Justice*, *Truth*, *Mercy* and *Love*, whereof the *Glory* is due to God in the highest; and is Admired and Celebrated by *Angels*, and enjoy'd for ever by Men, to be Acknowledg'd and Ador'd with profoundest Gratitude. For it was only infinite *Wisdom* that contriv'd a reconciliation between the Divine *Justice* and *Mercy*, so as to twist God's *Glory* with them, both by a contrivance that would never have entered into the Hearts either of *Men* or *Angels*; and to this day remains an Astonishment not to be Fathom'd by any Created Understanding.

It was only an Almighty *Power* that (to effect what *Wisdom* had contriv'd) could Unite Infinitely distant and different Natures, so as to joyn Heaven and Earth, God and Man, in one Person; confining Immenity, and exhibiting a *Virgin* Mother, and an Infant God.

It was severe *Justice* against sinful Guilt, that caus'd such an *Humiliation* of the only *Son of God*, and obliged him to undergo the Execution of that *Wrath* due to the *Nature* he assum'd, and to which there was no possibility of *Reconciliation* without full *Satisfaction*. Thus, without being United to the

the *Divine Nature*, as it could not pay, so even God himself being *Incarnate* could not possibly escape.

It was the *Truth and Veracity* of God to his own faithful Promises and Predictions, which in the *Truth*.
fulness of time brought forth his Son, thus miracu- Gal: 4. 4.
lously, made of a Woman, fully answering his own Word, and both Man's Expectation and Necessity herein.

But above all, (to the Glory of God,) it was his Infinite *Mercy and Loving Kindness* that engaged his other Attributes to contrive and Effect Love.
so wonderfully for the Good of Lost Mankind, by such *Incarnation* of his Dear Son. Condescending to have Regard to our Low Estate, and to take our Case so much to Heart, as to think of Redeeming and Restoring us from the Depth of Misery, into which we had plunged our selves. Employing, not an *Angel* (which yet he had no Obligation to spare out of his Retinue from his Attendance on himself for our sakes) but his own only begotten Son, (the Lord of Angels, and God of God) out of his own Bosom; to come down from Heaven to Earth to raise us from Earth to Heaven; and to become a miserable mortal Man, to restore us to Life and Immortality. Even *U S*, whom he had no need of, no Obligation to; who had justly incurr'd his Wrath, and merited Ruine; being unworthy of Grace, and unwilling to accept of it. Falling by the Nature of *Angels* (that no less needed, and might more gratefully have resented Mercy) he assumed to himself vile and frail *Humanity*, on purpose that he might dwell among us, and familiarly converse with us, and thoroughly instruct us in our Duty, and shew us the Way to Eternal Life by his Heavenly Doctrine, and Holy Example; and so hereby let us
O see

see how God himself thought fit to Live in this World, when he was pleased to become *Man*.

Pf. 116. 12. *What then shall we render to the Lord for these and all other his innumerable and inestimable Benefits herein ! What Words can express ! What*

1 Tim. 1. 15. *Thoughts can comprehend a Favour so Uncon-*

ceivable and Ineffable ! This is surely, a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, (fit to be embrac'd and entertain'd with all possible Joy and Thankfulness, redounding to the Glory of God) that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners. This is the Gospel we profess ; A Message of good News (as the Etymology of the Word Imports) than which never more welcome hath come into the World ; never more grateful Report was heard by Mortal Ears. It is News from Heaven, and the most wonderful and best that ever came thence ; First published by Angels, (as most worthy the Mouth and Errand of so Glorious Creatures) at which all Heaven was pleas'd and ravish'd with Joy, breaking instantly forth into Hymns of Praise and Congratulation ; and it was sent peculiarly to Man on Earth, to express good

Lu. 2. 13. *will towards him, and a Love which passeth Knowledge, designing all that is Good or Grateful,*

Eph. 3. 19. *which all Nations desired and earnestly longed for ; which the good Patriarchs foreseeing did Rejoyce at, and the Prophets in so Magnificent Strains did predict and presignify. To God therefore be the Glory, as of all his Works, so of this especially of our Redemption, by the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, from us, who owe all we are, or hope to be of Good thereto ; without which we had remained for ever Miserable ; whereby we may be certain of everlasting Happiness ; For which the Devil Blasphemes and Maligns us ; and wherein*

wherein the last and utmost Grace and Favour of God is manifested towards us, beyond the Proportion of our Acknowledgments, or Apology for the Stupidity of senseless Ingratitude.

2. *It concerns us to reap the Benefit hereof our selves; by ready Acceptance of great Kindness from God, and sincere Compliance with his Will towards us, and utmost endeavouring to answer the main End of this great Mystery of Godliness; which is, that as Jesus Christ was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, and Born of the Virgin Mary, and took upon himself our Nature, so we, through the assistance of the same Spirit, should put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and become Followers of him, in all those Christian Graces he Exemplified to us in our Nature, comporting with the Dignity and Honour conferr'd by him thereon. That since God became Man; Man might become in some degree like God. That as the Godhead may not be disgraced, so Manhood may be exalted by such Relation. For which purpose, this Mystery is especially to Influence us with the Sanctification and Humiliation of our Natures.*

1. *Sanctification is one great Benefit intended, and to which we are obliged by Christ's Incarnation. For if the Son of God could not assume our Nature till it was Sanctified by the Holy Ghost, then neither can he assume us to himself, so long as our Nature remains Stain'd and Unsanctified. For tho' he took our Nature upon himself, yet not the Corruption of our Nature; which being rejected by him, is not to be retained by us. For therefore was he Conceived by the Holy Ghost of a pure Virgin, without partaking of the Original Corruption by any Seminal Traduction. And the same Overshadowing Power, which form'd his Humane Nature, is*

to Reform ours. The Purity of *Natural Generation*, inferring the necessity of our *Spiritual Regeneration*. That as he was Sanctified in the Womb, so we become Sanctified in our Life; and Brethren to him in the Spirit, by the same Agent whereby he became our Brother in the Flesh. As Christ was by the Dispensation of God, so We,

Jo. 1. 13. by his Grace are to be *Born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God*; which will render us far more truly allied to Christ, than even his partaking our Nature hath done, and without which Spiritual, no Carnal Alliance can profit. *Christ who knew no Sin*, being at the furthest distance and estrangedness to them that abide in their Sins; and Unsanctified Humanity having no Relation to, nor Correspondence with the *Incarnation* of our Saviour;

Act. 3. 26. who was sent to bless us in turning every one of us

Tit. 2. 12, 13. from his Iniquities. And the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, and hath appeared unto all Men, will not make us Partakers of it in any other way, nor by any other Means, than by teaching us that denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously and Godly in this present World. Not abusing the Nature God hath vouchsafed so to Dignify, Reverencing it for his sake; and keeping Pure, what he hath Purified, possessing

1 Thes. 4. 4. our Vessel in Sanctification and Honour; being Holy from the same Divine Principle, as he was Holy in all manner of Conversation. Which, tho' the Work of God, yet is within the Compass of our own Power, and if we earnestly desire, and sincerely endeavour it, he hath obliged himself to work in us to will and do of his own good Pleasure. So that as all shall share of the Grace of God, and are never the better for Christ's becoming Man, who are not made

made better Men thereby; so can none be blamed but Men themselves, if they will not lay hold of this Benefit of *Christ's Incarnation*, to their own *Sanctification*. Another good and necessary Fruit, whereof is also

2. *Our Humiliation*. The Condescension of God ^{Humilia-} to assume our Nature, for our sakes, obliging us ^{tion.} to stoop to any Service or Condition allotted to us for his sake. It no way becoming us to be refractory, or impatient upon any Account, since he hath thus submitted and debased himself upon our own Account. Who was contented to be Born so obscurely, and live all his Life so meanly; and when he took upon him to deliver Man, did not abhor the Virgins Womb. Whence, (as St. Paul Phil. 2. 5, argues) the same Mind ought to be in us which was 6, 7, 8. also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no Reputation. and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men. And being found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. Which Consideration cannot but excite in us an *Universal Obedience*, to do or suffer cheerfully, whatever is required from us, without thinking much of leaving our Lusts and Enjoyments for him, who left his Glory and a Kingdom for us. It will also inspire us with *Humble and mean thoughts of our selves*, to think no Office below us, wherein we may serve the Necessities of another, who have so abundantly been Ministered unto by the Condescension of one so infinitely our Superiour. It ought to beget in us *Universal Charity*, and hearty good Will to do good in the World, and to put on *Humanity*, since our Lord assumed *Humans Nature*; who being Rich,

2 Cor. 8. 9. yet for our sakes became poor that we through his Poverty might be Rich. It should indue us with Resolute Patience to bear the Sorrows and Calamities of this Life, which cannot be greater than his, and are Alleviated, and Sanctified thereby to us. In a Word, it will cause a *Cheerful Contentment* and *Worldly Contempt*, to be satisfied and always easy with our present Circumstances, since, ('tis odds) in many Instances they are better than were His; to be sure not worse; which however no way tend to recommend us to God's Favour; and to raise our selves above all fondness of the Worlds Good Things, that could not gain the Esteem of its own Lord; who refused and rejected its Glory as empty and not comparable to the Innocent Poverty of a *Virgin*; whose Condition ought, therefore, to be hereby endeared to us; and her Person for ever Dignify'd, and by all Generations called *Blessed*. Not by giving unsavory and Blasphemous Titles; presuming to Equal, and sometimes Prefer her to the Deity. Not yielding her any Acts of Religious Worship, as some too notoriously are observed to do. But by Thanking God for her, by bearing a reverent Esteem towards her, and by imitating her excellent Vertues, that fitted her for so high Honour in so low a Condition; and can alone fit us to be Honoured with her, and all other Saints departed in the True Faith of her Son.

To whom with the Father and Holy Ghost, Three Persons and one God, be duly ascribed, all Honour, Power, Glory, and Dominion, now and ever. Amen.

SERMON XII
ON THE
Fourth Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Acts-iii. 18.

*But those things which God before had shewed by
the Mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ
should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

THE Incarnation of our Saviour, as the
First Part of his *Humiliation*, having
been Discours'd on in our Last; the
other Part, which completes it, now
follows, being his *Passion*, foretold by the Prophets, *Christ's*
and fulfilled by Christ, and profess'd by us to be Be- *Passion.*
lieved in this Fourth Article of our Creed, viz. He
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, Dead,
and Buried, He Descended into Hell; which is the
present Argument of this Discourse.

These words are Part of St. Peter's Sermon to the Jews, and contain a plain Intimation of the Prediction of Christ's *Sufferings*, and a positive Assertion of its Completion by him. Assuring us that whatsoever was foretold by God, concerning the sufferings of Christ in the Old Testament, may be found fulfilled by our Jesus in the New, which now shall be consider'd, as directed to be Believed by us, both in general, That he Suffered, and particularly, That he was Crucified, Dead and Buried, and descended into Hell.

In general.

I. As to Christ's *Sufferings* in General, as they were clearly foretold, so were they abundantly fulfilled in our Jesus his suffering under Pontius Pilate.

Gen. 3, 15.

They were foretold from the very First to the Last, being intimated in the first Promise of the Messiah, That the Serpents Seed should bruise the heel of the Seed of the Woman. The Remembrance whereof was perpetuated in the Sacrifices under the Law, and in the Sufferings of all those Persons, who were the most Eminent Types of him. And finally, they were so very lively and plainly describ'd by *Isaiah*, in that his Famous 53d Chapter, as hath forced all Opposers, either to yield to the Truth of that Prophecy, or fly to the most weak and ridiculous Evasions; it being undeniable that the Person there Treated on was both the Messiah and a Sufferer; being said to be a *Man of Sorrows*, and acquainted with Grief; Oppressed and Afflicted; Wounded and bruised; Brought to the slaughter, and cut off out of the Land of the Living; so plainly were those things foretold of Christ's *Sufferings*.

All which our Jesus abundantly fulfilled, even in Kind, Degree, Cause, Manner, End, and the very Circumstances thereof.

I. As

As to the Kind of our Saviour's Sufferings, they were all endured in his Humane Nature; who is therefore said to have Suffered for us in the Flesh. His Deity being impassible; and that Nature he took from us, being the only proper Subject and Recipient of that Passion which he underwent for us; In all the Interests whereof he was touched thereby. In his Reputation by Contempt and Scorn; being despised and rejected of Men, and made of no Reputation. In his Body, by Internal infirmities, and External Injuries; being Stricken, Afflicted, Wounded, Bruised and Scourged: And in his Soul by Melancholy Apprehension and Dolorous Sense; being a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief, on whom the Lord laid the Iniquity of us all.

As to kind.

1 Pet. 4. 1.

Isa. 53. 3.

Phil. 2. 7.

Isa. 53. 4, 5.

v. 3. 6.

*2. As to Degree, the Sufferings of Christ our Lord were most incomparably far beyond what any other Person was ever sensible or capable of. This is Express'd by the Evangelists, in the most significant words, of his being *Sorrowful, Sore Amazed, and very heavy*, implying an Emphaticalness in the Original, which our Translation comes far short of. This was Manifested in extraordinary Effects; the Son of God being so far Driven to distrust his own Humane Ability, as to supplicate even his own Disciples for Aid and Succour, to *carry, and watch with him*; Thrice and earnestly deprecating the Cup, which e're while he had reached after, made his whole Errand into the World for, and was *frustrated till it was accomplished*. The Strength of Humane Nature needing fresh Support from Heaven, by the Administration of an *Angel appearing to strengthen him*; and in a Cold Winter Mid-night, falling not only into a *Sweat*, but a *Sweat of Blood*; *great drops of Blood falling to the ground*. It was no light*

Degree.

Mar. 26.

37.

Mar. 14.

33.

Mat. 26.

38.

—v. 39.

Lu. 12. 50.

—22. 43.

—v. 44.

light Conflict within that caused so strange and unheard of a Symptom without. *This is Aggravated by the Occasion*; On him being laid the Iniquities of us all; even the inconceivable weight of all the Sins, the numberless, hainous Sins and Abominations, that ever have been, are, or shall be committed by Mankind. The apprehension whereof necessarily working the same effects of Sorrow, Shame, Fear and Trembling (Desperation and Sin only excepted) in our Saviour, as in the Sinner. Who tho' he was Personally Innocent, yet was Judicially, and by way of interpretation, the greatest Offender and Sufferer for Sin that ever was. Especially considering, also, herewith, that this must needs be *Augmented by the delicateness of his Constitution*; in whom Nature was Pure, Pliable, Vivid and Apprehensive; rendring the Impressions more sensible, and the Pains he felt both in Mind and Body more Sharp and Afflictive to him. Inso-much that the Sufferings of our Lord appear hence of no ordinary Degree or vulgar Stamp; he fulfilling in the very highest degree, whatever was Prophefied of the sufferings of the Messias; to whom may truly be applyed that Lamentation of Jeremiah, *Behold, and see if there be any Sorrow like to my Sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger.*

Cause.

3. And as to the Cause of all this suffering of our Saviour Christ's; as it was foretold of the Messias, that it pleased the Lord to bruise him; and that it was not an Enemy but an Acquaintance, that was to be immediately Instrumental therein; so did our Jesus receive his sufferings, ultimately from the Hands of God, his own Father, to whom he was most Dear. The Cup he received to drink being what his

II. 53. 10.

II. 55. 12,

13.

Jo. 18. 11.

his Father gave him, and the sense of whose Presence being withdrawn, wrung from him that dolorous complaint upon the Cross, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* The Injuries of an Enemy however easily born, the forsaking of such a Father is intolerable. Immediately, he also suffer'd from the undeserv'd Malice and Cruelty of his own Nation, his own Kindred according to the Flesh, the Seed of Abraham; People Worshipping the same God, and acknowledging the same Scriptures; the *Visible Church*; the Chief *Representatives* thereof, most Eminent in Place and Profession; in the most *Holy City*; through the Treachery of one of his *Apostles*; none of whom he had ever injured, but obliged them all with Miracles, Instructions, and tenderest Love and Compassion; All which evince his Passion to be Barbarous and Inhumane. But the *Procuring Cause* of all this to him was only our Sins; *who was delivered for our Offences*; and became a *Curse for us*, even we by these Instruments inflicting all the Mockery, Contumely, Sorrow, Pain and Indignity He indured; which as it aggravated his Sufferings, so did it fulfil in him those things, which God before had shewed by the Mouth of all his Prophets that Christ should Suffer. And that too

Rom. 4. 25
Gal. 3. 13

4. As to the manner of his Sufferings, it was *Willingly, Innocently and Patiently*, as was foretold of the *Messias*, who is described as pouring out his Soul unto Death, and crying out, *Lo I come, and I delight to do thy Will, O my God*; as being One that had done no Violence, neither was any deceit in his Mouth; and tho' Oppressed and Afflicted, yet that he opened not his Mouth; being brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearer is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth. Whose Character herein exactly

Manner.
Is. 53. 12.

Pl. 40. 7, 8.

Is. 53. 9.

—V. 7.

- agrees to our Saviour in his Passion, who unconstrainedly, and without resistance *gave himself for*
- Eph. 5. 2.** *us an Offering and Sacrifice to God*; and that these Scriptures might not be unfulfilled, he laid by his Power held in the Manifestations of his Divinity, check'd the Fears of his Humanity, and carefully removed all Impediments to his voluntary Sufferings. *He was made Sin for us, who knew no Sin*; who not only did no harm, but did nothing but Good; whom nothing but *Envy delivered* and *Condemned*; being Justified of his Betrayer, Cleared by his Fellow-Sufferers, and Acquitted by his very Biassed Judge. Yet amidst all such Injustice and irksome Temptations to Impatience, scarce spoke he a word, not one Murmur did he utter or conceive against the Justice or Goodness of God or Man: but entirely submitted to, and acquiesced in this so severe Dispensation of Providence, Resigning up his own Will, as pleased with his Sufferings, that seemed good to God,
- Lu. 22. 42.** *Not as I will, but as thou Wilt*; yea *Laying down*
- Jo. 10. 18.** *his very Life of himself*, which otherwise no Man could have *taken from him*; and praying for his Executioners, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*
- And** 5. *And as to the End of all these Sufferings*, as was foretold of the *Messias*, they were undergone and accomplished by our *Jesus*. Purely out of free Love to us, without any Desert in us, or Necessity in him, Being *found of them that sought him not*; on whom the *Lord* laid the *Iniquity of us all*, and with whose *Stripes we are Healed*, the *Chastisement of our Peace* being upon him. Who Suffer'd in our stead to restore us to Gods Service, that he might *Redeem us from all Iniquity, and Purifie unto him a Peculiar People, Zealous of good Works*, in whom we have *Redemption through*
- Rom. 10.**
- II. 53. 6. 5.**
- Ps. 2. 14.**
- Eph. 1. 7.**
- 2 Cor. 5.**
- 19.**

through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins; in whom ^{1 Jo. 3. 2.}
 God was Reconciling the World unto himself, ^{Gal. 4. 7.} not im-
 putting their trespasses unto them. Receiving us into
 the Relation of his Sons, who are now the Sons of
 God. Entitling us to a Sure and Everlasting In-
 heritance in Heav'n, being also Heirs of God through
 Christ; and manifesting hereiu to us the Glory of
 the Divine Excellencies, displayed in the Wis-
 dom contriving, the Power effecting, the Mercy
 forgiving, and yet the Justice exacting a Satisfa-
 ction in our Lords Sufferings; and all this for us
 Men, and our Salvation! For which Good Will,
 Glory be to God in the Highest!

6. Finally, As to the very Circumstances of Christ's Circum-
 Sufferings. These were exactly agreeable to what ^{stances.}
 was foretold, and hereof a Remembrance is
 carefully preserved, and made part of this Arti-
 cle of our Faith, implied in our Belief, that he Suf-
 fered under Pontius Pilate; Denoting the Time
 when, The Person under whom, The Place where,
 and the Manner how he Suffered; all contribu-
 ting to the Confirmation of Truth, and explain-
 ing the Correspondence of our Jesus's and the
 Lord Christ's Sufferings.

For in that he Suffered under Pontius Pilate, ^{Whom.}
 we are assured of the Time thereof; so as to ex-
 clude all Confusion and Uncertainty about the
 Truth of the Story, and to Confirm our Belief of
 Jesus his Suffering, as Messiah, even in the fulness of
 Time, when the Scepter was departed from Judah, ^{Gen. 49. 10.}
 and the Sovereign Authority was in the Hands of
 a Roman. The Person of whom, as to his Name, ^{By whom.}
 is therefore particularly inserted, to excite and
 direct our Notice of him, concerning his Country,
 his Office, and his Behaviour as concerned here-
 in, not a little concurring to represent the Truth
 and

Where. and Importance of our Lord's Sufferings. The Place where, being assigned hereby to *Judea*, where this *Pontius Pilate* was Governour; and to *Jerusalem* the Metropolis, where the Tribunal of Justice was erected, and whose Character it was to be the Killer of the Prophets, and the Stoner of them, who were sent unto her.

How. As to the manner how Christ Suffered, it was foretold and typify'd to be by Crucifixion, which was not agreeable to the Laws and Customs of the *Jews*, by whose Malice he suffer'd, and which could not otherwise be so reasonably and easily accounted for, but by thus retaining the Blasted Name of such a Wretch among the Pure Articles of our Christian Faith in our Creed, which had deserved neither Remembrance nor Mention by us here, but to mind us of such Circumstances of Christ's Sufferings as serve to Explain and Illustrate both their Nature and Reality.

The due Consideration whereof (thus only considered in general) is improveable to excellent and profitable Use; as tending,

*The Use
hereof.*

1. To assure us of the reality of Christ's Humane Nature which is the only proper Subject of Passion, and was necessitated to Suffer for the Redemption of Us who are of that Nature.

2. To convince us of the heinous guilt of Sin, appearing so exceeding sinful, in necessitating so bitter a Sacrifice for its Atonement.

3. To strengthen our Faith and Trust in such Atonement actually made by Christ; who alone Suffered what Justice had exacted, and thereby assured us of the Expiation of our Sins.

4. To draw forth our Admiration of the Love of every Person in the Holy Trinity, particularly concerned for our sakes herein. Of the Father contriving and per-

permitting it, God so loving the World, as to give up *Jo. 3. 16.*
 his only begotten Son. Of the Son complying and
 accomplishing it even to the Death, Greater Love
 than which no Man can have, than to lay down his
 Life for his Friends: And of the Holy Ghost, Ori-
 ginally conspiring in the Gracious Project, Exe-
 cutively conducting by Miraculous Operation
 our Saviour into his Fleshly Tabernacle, and by
 unmeasurable Communications of Divine Virtue,
 Assisting, Inspiring, and Supporting his Huma-
 nity, as through the whole Course of his Life, so
 particularly in his Sufferings, who did through the *Heb. 9. 14.*
 Eternal Spirit offer himself without Spot to God.

This tends further

5. To beget Hope and Consolation in us, of Christ's
 Fitness and Readiness to Compassionate and Sup-
 port us, under any of our Sufferings; having Suf-
 fered himself in our Nature, and been subject to
 Misery, he may be presumed to become prone
 to Mercy. For we have not an High Priest, which *-4. 15. 16.*
 cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities,
 but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without
 Sin. And therefore are we encouraged to come bold-
 ly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mer-
 cy, and find Grace to help in time of need. The same
 Consideration also is exceeding necessary,

6. To rectify our Notion of the Nature of our Chri-
 stian Profession; which contrary to the Inclination
 of the Nice and Careless is design'd, not to Call
 us to a Condition of Ease and Security, but to
 Conform us to a Suffering Redeemer, entering us
 into a State of Warfare, engaging us by our Bap-
 tismal Covenant in Military Terms, making us
 not only Servants of Christ's Family, but Soldiers
 of his Camp, designed for Dangers and Difficul-
 ties, for Toyl and Hardship, by which the Cap-
 tivity of Sin is broken.

tain of our Salvation was perfected. And if those things were done in a green Tree, what shall be done in the dry? Better Usage is neither due nor becoming for the Servant than his Master, whose Steps he is to follow; and whom if it behoved to Suffer, before he entered into Glory, it is but reasonably allotted his Disciples through much tribulation to enter into the Kingdom of God. But especially this Doctrine is of direct Influence. Lastly,

To beget and excite many excellent and requisite Christian Graces in us. Such as Love to God, enflamed from a sense of his so great Love to us herein. Heartly gratitude, we being unexpressibly obliged for the kindness done us hereby. Firm Trust, and Sure Hope, grounded on such an unparalleld Experience of Bounty and Mercy. Reverential Fear, impress'd by so singular an Example of Divine Justice. Holy Joy and Consolation, springing from the effect of so doleful Appearance. Wholesome Remorse and true Repentance, urg'd from our Sins occasioning such a Tragedy. Intire and Sincere

Phil. 2. 8. Obedience, dearly purchased by such an Obedience unto Death for our sakes. Lowly Humility, exemplified in such an Infinite Debasement of Majesty for our Service. Chearful Patience, Taught with such advantage, under the very utmost of Sufferings. Contempt of the World, warranted in such a depreciating its Bomps and Vanities as to prefer its Adversities before them. Due Valuation of the Worth of our selves, demonstrated by such an excessive Price, Set and Paid for our Recovery and Salvation. And finally an Universal Charity, directed and engaged to all, for whom so tender an Affection was born, and so woful Tortures sustain'd by Christ himself, and whose Commandment

Jo. 15. 12. is this, That we Love one another, as he hath Loved us.

A

A point so fruitful of wholesom Instruction is this Doctrine of our Lords *Sufferings*, in general, to kindle devout Affections, and administer the most Efficacious Inducements and Incentives to an *Holy Life*, for which he *Suffered under Pontius Pilate*.

II. From this general Consideration of our Saviour's *Christ's* *Passion*, proceed we now (for the further Illustration of our Text and Creed) to Discourse on the most Remarkable Particulars among those things which God before had shewed by the Mouth of all his Prophets, that *Christ* should suffer, and which we are taught in our Creed, that our *Jesus* hath so Suffered, and fulfilled, in these four several Instances, or distinct Degrees of Suffering, viz. 1. He was Crucified. 2. Dead. 3. Buried, and 4. He Descended into Hell.

I. The Crucifixion of *Christ* rightly calls for our next Contemplation, standing in our Creed between his *Passion* which it concludeth, and his *Death* which it introduceth. The Nature, Reason, and Influence whereof require distinctly to be consider'd.

1. The Nature or Manner of this kind of Execution, was by fastning the Naked Body to a Cross of Wood with Nails driven through the Feet, and Hands extended upon a Transverse Beam, near to the Top of an Erected Post, on which above the Head was fasten'd a Table, whereon was written the Malefactors Accusation; the Body resting upon another short piece of Wood infix'd into and coming out from that which was Erect. Which was once the Universal Punishment allotted for the Vilest Villains, and always esteem'd very Grievous for its Pain, and very infamous for its Kind; now generally disused, for several Hundred Years, as Christianity hath prevail'd

vail'd, out of a due Respect and Pious Honour to the Death of our Lord. Who in this Painful and Shameful manner exposed himself for the space of Six Hours for our sakes, *Enduring the Cross, and Despising the Shame. Enduring* the piercing sense of those Wounds made in his Hands and Feet, by the stubborn Nails rending those most Nervous Parts. The full weight of his Body Hanging on those Tender Wounds, and his Limbs extended as on a Wrack; exposed to the Scorching Sun, and Cutting Festring Air. The so far distance of these Wounds from his Vitals, rendring his Death lingring and very tedious, thereby Doubling and Trebling every Pain to the Sufferer. And tho' our Saviour was hereby dispatched in six Hours space, to the wonder of his Executioners, *marveling if he were already dead,* whenas it was not unusual for such to remain some whole Days, even till Hunger had Starved or Fowls Devoured them; yet the Extraordinary Perception of his Mind, and Quickness of his Sense, made each Minutes Sufferance exceed the Pangs of an Ordinary Death to him. A sense of which Torments has sometimes procur'd the Mercy of Strangling before their Infliction; and to this Day hath derived a Word signifying *Tormented*, which the *Romans*, who most used this Punishment, in their Language express hence by *Cruciatu*, strictly signifying one *Crucified*, as if in such Torment was in its Center, beyond which there was no Extending it. Which yet our Lord not only *Endured*, but he *Despised* also its Shame, wherein as there was much, so fell it all upon him. Who submitted to this Punishment peculiar to Slaves, Traytors, and the Vilest Malefactors, it rendring such esteemed as *accursed of God*, and exposed

Deut. 21.
23.

bliss

exposed

exposed by his special Order, to the Contempt, Scorn, Cruelty and Censure of all Beholders. Which our Lord met with, and patiently bore; tho' Number'd with such Transgressors, Crucified between two Thieves, made the Reproach of Men, and despised of the People, staring upon him, laughing him to Scorn, shooting out the Lip, shaking the Head, and in a jeer verifying what was foretold they should say to him, *he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.* Such is the Manner, and such the Torment and Shame of this Punishment of Crucifixion.

2. The Reason whereof was manifestly not Accidental, but Choice and Design. This being one of those things which God before had shewed, that Christ should Suffer; having foretold it by the Mouth of Zech. 12, his Prophets, who particularly spoke of his being Pierced; yea in his very Hands and Feet; expressing the Pain by Wounds and Bruises; and the Shame of it, by being despised and rejected of Men, and reckoned among the Transgressors. And having Typify'd it by Isaac's carrying the Wood he was devoted to be Sacrificed on; by Moses his lifting up the Brazen Serpent on a Pole, for Sinners to look upon and be Healed in the Wilderness; and by the Paschal Lamb presignifying Christ our Passover. This kind of Death, moreover, fitly demonstrates the Vehemency of God's Love for us; and the hainousness of our Sins against him; taking away the Curse and Enmity of the Law belonging to us; yielding a valuable Compensation for those Everlasting Tortures due to the Sins Christ dyed for; Displaying and Exemplifying with the greatest Advantage, the most Excellent and Difficult Virtues of Constancy, Meekness, Patience, Resignation, Submission, and Charity,

rity in Pitying, Excusing and Obliging his most bloody and merciless Enemies : By so obvious an Execution, *drawing all Men to take Notice of, to Examin and Attest his Death, for Confirmation of our Faith; and Conviction of Infidelity.* Further, hereby is signified the Nature of that Kingdom he intended to Erect invisibly in the Hearts of Men, so wholly disclaiming all External and worldly Power and Honour, in so dolorous and disgraceful a Circumstance; discovering more publickly by such a convenient Test Mens Opinions and Affections to himself and his Doctrine, in order to discriminate from the rest of the World his Genuine Disciples, that should not be *offended in him, or by the Scandal of the Cross,* but would discern true Goodness through so dark a Cloud, and Love it tho' so ill-favourably disfigured; he being *set for the fall and rising again of many, that the thoughts of many Hearts might be revealed;*

Lu. 2. 34, 35. In order again, as to Illustrate and Advance the Wonder of the Propagation of the Gospel, and demonstrate the Aid and special Concurrence of God therein; that *the Stone which the Builders with so much Scorn refused, should become the head Stone of the Corner,* this could be no other than the Lord's doings, and may well seem *marvellous in our Eyes.*

Psal. 118. 22. There are also divers Analogies and Resemblances, extracted by Devout Meditation from this kind of Suffering; suggesting Practical Truths, and exciting good Affections, from the consideration of our Lord's Posture, Deportment, and Treatment on the Cross. For which, and the like good Reasons already mentioned, it was, that God exposed his Son, and our Lord chose himself (of whom any kind of Death was in its self infinitely valuable and most precious in the sight of God,

God, and might therefore have been sufficient towards the Accomplishment of the general designs of his Passion, yet submitted he) to suffer under so Odious and Ugly Circumstances, upon a painful and shameful Cross.

3. *The Influence of which Consideration seems,*

1. *Directly to Condemn the Scandalous and Idolatrous Worship of the Cross.* The Instrument of so much Cruelty, not deserving an equal respect with him that Suffered on it; being not more Sacred for the Body it Bore, than the *Ass* our Saviour once Rode on. It remain'd unregarded for Three Hundred Years till a Miracle was Forged to procure, what might have been without any difficulty secured, had it been sooner thought to have Merited Adoration. This now hath multiplied its Chips to that prodigious Bulk, that it was long since by *Erasmus* computed sufficient to Load several Ships; there being scarce a City, Town, Village, or Religious House in Popish Countries, but pretend to have got a Bit of it, which is always Worship'd as oft as exposed to View; and used as a God, what used our Jesus as the Vilest Slave and Greatest Malefactor. And yet nevertheless our Saviour's Dying on the Cross may serve,

2. *Justly to vindicate that Innocent Ceremony in our Church of Signing with it in Baptism.* Even then we are Initiated into Christ's Service, and it becomes us to receive some Badge of our Profession; than which there is none more proper, (to signify our *not being ashamed* of what proved so general a Scandal to some) nor of more Ancient Use in the Church, than this of *the Sign of the Cross*. The which, as it is Ordain'd and Appointed in our Church, having not the least Affinity with the Use thereof, as it is in the Romish Rituals; and

having been declared to intend no part of our Worship, is in regard to the Honour of a Crucified Saviour most unreasonably censured by any. However, all will consent with me, that this Doctrine of the Cross, is intended

3. *Plainly to teach us the great Matter of a Christians Glory and Rejoycing.* Which is not Worldly success in Honours, Learning, Riches, or Pleasures; but the Scorned, Rejected Cross of Christ; whereon Divine Love was displayed, our Redemption Transacted, our Sins Expiated, our Miseries Born for us, and the Enemies of our Salvation vanquished; and whereat we have, therefore, not only no reason to be offended or ashamed; but thereon to fix our most joyous and grateful Exultations; as having nothing to *Glory in, save in the Cross of Christ.* And yet, the Cross being the Instrument of so much Suffering to our Lord, it ought,

4. *To warn us against Re-crucifying Christ by our Sins;* for which he hath already endured so much; and, which cherished, not only frustrates all he hath done, but shews the same Malice and Cruelty to re-act, were it possible, the Bloody Tragedy afresh, by putting him to an open shame; sporting with his Agonies, and making those things our Mirth and Entertainment of our lives, which have had their Hands in his Blood. The Executioners of such Barbarity, cannot be encouraged with the least Humanity, which for our Saviour's sake, the Remembrance of the Cross should render abhorred by us. And

5. *Admonish us how to execute the Just Revenge due hence thereto.* Even by treating our Sins, after the same manner as our Lord suffered for them; with as great Eagerness, and little Mercy; *Know-*

ing

ing this, (as St. Paul intimates it) that our Old Man is Crucified with him, [is to be proceeded against, and brought to Destruction, just as Christ was] and therefore says he again, I am Crucified with Christ; and made conformable to his Death. For true Repentance is a kind of Transcript of his Passion; beginning with the Agony and Sorrow, Ripening by Consideration, Dispatched by hastening to Execution; with all the Malice and Cruelty we can express towards our Sins, hanging them on the Cross; and there leaving them to expire never to be taken down, being Nailed thereto; and instead of our so Crucified Sins, thence bearing with us this further Instruction, even,

Rom. 6. 6.

Gal. 2. 20.

Phil. 3. 10.

Col. 2. 14

6. How to take up our own Cross (as our Lord hath Commanded) and to follow him. Cheerfully and Resolutely denying our selves, and resigning our Interests to the Divine Will, and voluntarily embracing whatever Shame or Contumely, or loss of Liberty and Goods, or pain of Body, and Death it self, in Obedience thereto, that is unavoidable in our way of Duty; from which nothing is to drive us, and to which the Sufferings of our Lord lead and oblige us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his Steps. Such being the Nature, Reason and Influence of Christ Crucified, the Completion and Result thereof next following is

Mat. 10.

38.

1 Pet. 2.

II. His Death. To Explain and Illustrate our Belief concerning which, I shall also consider its Nature, Certainty, Manner, Cause and Influence respecting us.

I. The Consideration of the Nature of Christ's Death, is to admonish of what we are intended to mean in our Professing to believe it. Which as we do so in a proper, and not Metaphorical sense

Properly

only so, being in kind the same with that to which all Mortals are Subject, it consists in a Privation of Life, by a solution of the Union of Soul and Body, and separation thereof each from other; whereby Christ ceased to be Man, whose Humanity was divided as to its Parts, whilst the Union remained intire as to his Natures; and while his Soul and Body were separated one from the other, both were United to God, who took them both together.

Certainty.

2. *The Certainty of Christ's Dying*, in which Notion, as the Truth of his *Resurrection* depending thereupon, and as tho' the *Natural* yet not *Necessary* Consequent of his *Crucifixion*, renders it requisite to be regarded; so it is established upon the most *Infallible* Testimonies of Reason; having been the constant conclusion, both of his Enemies and Friends; before whose Eyes it was Executed, in the most Publick and Effectual Manner; upon a Cross in a Crowd; near a Populous City; to the satisfaction of his Executioners, who therefore brake not his Legs, as they did those of the other Two Crucified with him; yet to make sure, one of the Insolent Soldiers *Pierced his Side* with a Wound that would certainly have made an end of him, had he not been Dead before. In regard whereunto he is therefore affirm'd to be killed, to be slain, to give up the Ghost; and his Body was therefore took, down and disposed for Burial, and all the Spectators returned from the sight, assured that all was *Finished*, and to this Day hath it never been gainsaid.

In a Manner wonderful.

3. *The Manner also of such his Death* was very remarkable; as for its *Innocency*, its *Calmness*, its *Voluntariness*: so more particularly for those wonderful Occurrences attending, and Attesting the

extraor-

extraordinary Importance of it. For three Hours from Noon, an amazing *Darkness* cover'd the Face of Nature from the unpleasing Sight. A Terrible *Earthquake* shook the Ground and rent the Rocks, as with Convulsions of Sorrow and Trembling. *The Graves were opened, and the dead Bodies of the Saints arose at the Alarm. The Vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the Top to the Bottom,* very significantly admonishing of the Entrance of our *Great High Priest in the most Holy Place, with his own Blood, having obtained eternal Redemption for us; Of the rending the Vail of his Humanity, by a proper Death, In a new and living way, which he then consecrated for us thro the Vail; that is to say his Flesh: Of Unfolding and Discovering all the Dark Mysteries of the Jewish Ceremonial Religion; And of opening the Kingdom of Heaven freely now to all Believers. All Nature concerning its self in the Funeral Obsequies of its Lord, signifying and attesting the Truth and Importance of such an Occurrence.*

4. *The Cause whereof was various and considerable. The Principles Disposing and Moving hereto, were Internally the Divine Goodness, and Externally Man's Distress; By the Grace of God, Jesus having tasted Death for every Man. The Meritorious Cause hereof, was only our Sins, Christ dying for our Sins, according to the Scriptures. The Instrumental Cause of it, was God's Providence by the Hands of Wicked Men. And the Final Cause of all, was hereby to illustrate and display the Glorious Perfections of God in his Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness. Bringing this about for the Exaltation of Christ, who dyed to this end, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living: Fulfilling herein the manifold Types and Prophecies foreshadowin g*

Heb. 9.12.

—10. 20.

For Reasons various.

Heb. 2. 9.

1 Cor. 15. 3

Rom. 14. 9.

- dowing it, by the *Sacrifices*, and *Paschal Lamb*, and the *High Priest's Entrance* once a Year into the *Holy of Holies*, *not without Blood*; and it being of those things which God before had shewed by the Mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer (Daniel foretelling the Time when the Messiah should be cut off; And Isaiah the Manner of his being brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, to be cut off out of the Land of the living, and that he should make his Soul an Offering for Sin) Hereby establishing and sealing to the Truth of his Doctrine: and Finally, procuring the Salvation of Mankind, by satisfying the Justice, and appeasing the Wrath of God, Reconciling both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one Body by the Cross, having slain the Enmity thereby: In whom we have Redemption through his blood, the Forgiveness of Sins; and being justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath through him; He giving himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works; He tasting Death for every Man; who his own self bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, the Punishment and Burden whereof lay upon his Shoulders; who was made to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.

He, though Innocent, voluntarily put himself into our Place who were Guilty. He suffer'd the Penalty due to us (the Dignity of his Person compensating for the Eternity of the Punishment) whereby the Damage done by Sin to the Law, was repaired, its just Authority vindicated and asserted, and the Mind of the supreme Rector fully Reconciled. Our Acceptance with whom is therefore upon the Account of this meritorious Satisfaction; and we are made Righteous with God in Consideration only thereof; on whose Merits is all

our

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our Reliance for Salvation, upon our sincere Repentance.

And this, in Brief, is the full and true Import of this Doctrine of the Death of Christ.

5. *The Influence and Use whereof*, may also, in a word, be

To Ends we-
ry Improv-
able.

1. To strengthen our Expectation and Sense of the Mortality of our Nature; Which, even cloathing the Son of God, was subject to, and actually suffered this its Fate.

2. To Sweeten and Encourage against the Slavish Fears thereof; which Christ hath influenced for us, pull'd out its Sting, conquer'd its Power, clear'd a Passage, and shewn us the Way through it to himself; He himself taking part of the same, that through Death he might Deliver them, who through Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bondage: This also tending,

Heb. 2. 14.
15.

3. To mind us of the Nature of our Profession; which in Compliance with the will of God, discloses us for Sufferings, and sets light by even Life it self, which we must be ready to sacrifice for it; Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the Flesh, we must arm our selves likewise with the same Mind; Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross. Teaching us,

1 Pet. 4. 1.
Heb. 12. 2.

4. To express, on all Occasions, the fullest Measure of Charity towards our Brethren. Since God has thus loved us, even unto Death, it is very reasonable that we also love one another in a Degree answerable to such both Obligation and Pattern: And because then he laid down his Life for us, we ought, saith St. John again, to lay down our Lives for the Brethren. This again obliging and instructing us,

1 Joh. 4. 11

— 3. 16.

5. To

Rom. 6.6. 5. *To Die to Sin; Knowing this as St. Paul remarks, that our old Man is Crucified (or, as it also is expressed in the Verse following, Dead with him) that the Body of Sin might be destroy'd, that henceforth we should not serve Sin.* Nothing short of the Death of those Rebels being acceptable Satisfaction for that Death which satisfied for them on no other Terms. The deepest *Mortification* does become our Duty in Conformity to the Death of Christ. And Finally, this of Right engaging us,

6. *To yield up our selves wholly to the Service of our Lord; whose now we are by a Purchase so dear and precious; and to whom our Life is due, to be commanded and dispos'd of at his Will and Pleasure, in Exchange of that dear Life of his, which he resigned for our sakes and in our stead, by which alone we live.* Now we are hence not our own; For we are bought with a Price: And therefore are we to glorify God in our Body, and in our Spirit, which are Gods. For Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which dyed for them. So utterly inconsistent is the Service of Sin with our Belief that Christ is dead.

The next Degree of Christ's Humiliation in his Passion, is (rightly) the Consequent Disposal of both the Parts of his Humanity after his Death, that dissolved their Union, and separated Body and Soul from each other. Concerning which, we are taught (both by what God before had shewed by the Mouth of his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, and also by what this Article of our Creed further suggests to us) distinctly to Believe That, in respect to his Body, he was Buryed; and, in respect to his Soul, that he also Descended into Hell; and in both Instances was treated as other Dead Men are, whereby

whereby we are further ascertain'd of the Truth of his *Humanity*, the Reality of his *Death*, and the Verity of his *Resurrection*, whereon the Christian Religion is founded. And upon this Account our Regard is particularly concern'd (as for a distinct and considerable Instance of our Saviour's *Passion*) next of all, for,

III. *His Burial*. Which, by a singular Providence interceding (contrary to the usual Customs of treating the Bodies of such as dyed his Death, and probably no less beside what Indignity the Malice of his Enemies further intended him) from the History thereof, we are assured, was according to Jewish Custom, and the express Words of their *Law*, in an Unlook'd for and Uncommon Honourable Manner, speedily solemnized: In Testimony of that Respect due to so sacred a Body: And in Correspondence to the Ancient Types and Prophecies foreshewing it, as also a Part of those things which Christ should suffer; the Son of Man being in the Heart of the Earth, as Jonas foreshewed Typically he should be, by his being in the Whale's Belly; And making his Grave with the Wicked, and with the Rich in his Death, as Isaiah foretold Prophetically of the *Messias*; and even to a Circumstance, was fulfill'd by Jesus, who not only Dyed, but was also Buryed according to the Scriptures: Hereby affording us a farther Testimony and Assurance of the Truth, both of our Lord's Death preceding, and of his *Resurrection* following.

And because whatsoever was done either By or To our Saviour, was intended, doubtless to reflect some Advantage upon us his Followers, and particularly to be an Example to us, that we should (where it is possible and becoming) follow his

his Steps, therefore hath this point also its Influence. 1. To mind us of our being Symbolically *Buried with Christ in Baptism*, (as to our Old Man, and the Body of Sin) whence our Resurrection is only to a *Newness of Life*. And, 2. To intimate the Decency and Honour fit to be received and given at the Funerals of Christian's Dead Bodies.

Col. 2. 12.

Rom. 6. 3, 4.

After the *Burial* of the *Body*, which is Assurance of the Separation of its *Soul*, it remains that we reflect also upon the Disposal of it, intended to express the last Particular of Christ's *Passion*, foretold by *Prophecy*, and inserted in our *Creed*, viz.

IV. *His Descent into Hell*. The *Truth* and *Meaning* and *Influence* whereof, comes now in Order briefly to be Accounted for.

He Descend-
ed into
Hell.

1. *The Truth* of the thing it self hath nothing of Difficulty, being made an *Article of Faith*, which hath for many hundreds of Years past been allowed a Place in our *Creed*, which the whole Church of Christ hath received, and hath the clear concurrence of the Scripture for it, even (setting aside many Passages, either capable of some other Sense, or not strongly enough evincing this) from that one Prophecy of the *Psalmist's* applied by St. Peter, in Proof of Christ's *Resurrection*, — *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*, — implying that there it was after Christ's Death, and before his Resurrection; and consequently, That he descended into Hell.

Aa. 2. 27.

2. The only Difficulty is to apprehend the *Meaning* hereof; so as to determine *what Part* of Christ it was that is hereby spoken of as in *Hell*: In *what Manner* it came thither, *what Place* that is, and to *what End*, he was there. A Resolution of which

which Queries would help us to Understand what we mean, by his *Descent into Hell*.

1. *The Part* by which Christ is said to have been in *Hell*, is (in the forecited Passage) express'd to be his *Soul*, as oppos'd unto his *Flesh* there; the Disposal whereof was mentioned before in the *Article* by his *Burial*, between which his Death had made a Separation so as to deny his *Descent* thither in both.

2. *The Descent*, of which, into *Hell*, is no more to be restrain'd to only a *Virtual* and *Metaphorical* Sense, than his *Death* or *Resurrection*, which are delivered in the same Tenour, and with the same Historical Simplicity. And therefore, to answer the Import of that *Scripture* and this *Article*, it can be meant of no other than of a Proper Remove thither by a *Local Motion*; the *Soul* separated by Death from the *Body* being in a *Distinct Place*, and not where it was when it informed the *Body*. Which Place, whether it be *Above* or *Below*, and the *Soul's* Motion thither be, in Rigorous and Proper speech, *Ascending* or *Descending*, yet may its Passage properly enough be termed a *Descent*, in conformity to the general Opinion of Mankind, the visible Descent of its Companion the *Body* into the Grave, and that State of Imperfection, where-e'er it is, necessarily imply'd in such a Separation, that Motion being accounted a *Descent* which so terminates in any mixture of *Humiliation*, as this into *Hell* does.

3. *For the Place Hell* (notwithstanding the Variety of Opinions concerning it) as mentioned by the *Psalmist*, and recited by us in our *Creed*, seems intended to import no more than (in Conjunction with his *Burial*, disposing of his *Body*) to account for the Disposal also of his *Soul*; To inform us that *Christ*, as other Men do at Death, removed in

in his *Soul* to the Place of *departed Spirits*; as in his *Body* to the *Grave*, which is the Place for *dead Corps*; where God design'd not long to suffer him to continue, either in the one or the other, but to make these two parts of him again meet and renew that Union violated by such a State. In which State, because there are Torments for the Wicked that can be happy in no State, and who are the greatest Part of Mankind, therefore it seems to have prevail'd, to appropriate the word *Hell* (which also signifies the State of separated Souls, in general, common to all, both good and bad) wholly, in its harshest Sense, to the *Hell of the Damned*; which yet in no wise hinders it from its including also in its Signification, the Contrary State of *Paradise* for the Righteous, since our Saviour, who also descended into *Hell* at his Death, promised the Penitent Thief, That he should be *with him that very day in Paradise*: and whereof the Patriarch *Jacob*, is to be understood when he spoke of his going down into the *Grave* to his Son, (it being the same Word in the Original) meaning not an *Artificial Grave* (which, upon the Supposition of *Joseph's* being devour'd by wild Beasts, was impossible) but the *natural Grave*, which is the State of separate Souls, and not determinable to any other part or condition thereof, than the *Paradise* of it wherein the Souls of good Men are certainly bestow'd at their Death. And which, though doubtless a State of Happiness, yet nevertheless, being a State also of *Separation*, it is not without some *Alloy*, (being under the Dominion and Disgrace of *Death* which is the *Wages of sin*; and short of the utmost Felicity Man is capable of, and hath Reason to expect, in the Re Union of his Soul and Body in the Happiness of Both,) and properly accounted

Lu. 23.43.

Gen. 37.
35.

ed as Part of Christ's *Humiliation and Passion.*

4. In this Sense therefore, may we most Intel-
ligibly and Orthodoxly *Believe* that *Christ descen-*
ded into Hell; and more safely and satisfactorily
determine his *Intent and End* hereof, to be in
Conformity to the Law of that Nature he assum-
ed; to satisfy the Law of Death which he took
upon him to do; And to undergo the Condition
of a Dead Man, as well as of a Living, in that im-
perfect Happiness proper to departed Pious Souls;
wherein also, it may be, he might give those Ho-
ly Fathers gone thither before him, the Satisfa-
ction of his Presence (whom they had in their
Life-time so much desired to see) and a further
Assurance of bringing their Souls to a Re-Union
with their Bodies, and so to a more Perfect Re-
demption.

5. *The Influence of all which, is,*

1. *To raise our Thankfulness to God for the Encou-*
agement herein given us against the Fears of Death;
whose State for the Soul, as well as Body, hath
been thus sanctified and sweetned for us by the
Presence of Christ; we neither fearing to go
where he hath been before us, nor doubting our
Deliverance and Return thence by the Power of
him who could not be holden by the Pains of Death, *Act. 2. 24.*
because it was not possible. And also,

2. *To oblige our most sedulous and circumspect En-*
deavours so to imitate the Holy Life of our dear Lord
on Earth, that when we also shall depart hence, we
may follow him in our Souls, to those Happy Mansions
of Hades [or State of Separation,] to which he
Descended; and where therefore we can only be
Safe and tolerably Happy.

Thus now having accounted for the several
Parts of this Article, it only remains that we sum

up what we are intended to confess therein concerning those Things our Jesus fulfill'd, and God before had shewed by the Mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer; which we declare to be, In General, That he submitted to Sorrows of all Kinds, in the utmost Extremity, by the Permission and Appointment of God from the Hands of Wicked Men, in the most Meritorious manner, for most Wise and Beneficial Ends, under the Roman Government, by the Sentence, and at the Tribunal of Pontius Pilate. And, in Particular, that he underwent the Ignominious and Painful Death of the Cross, yeilding up the Ghost thereon, in a Voluntary and Calm manner for our sakes and in our stead, for Satisfaction of Offended Justice; Being afterwards disposed of, according to the Laws of Humanity, in a State of Death; Resigning his Body to the Grave, and his separated Soul passing into Paradise; hereby extending his Passion to the utmost Degree, our Nature in him was capable of being Humbled. And in this Sense, every Man is supposed to say for himself, I believe that the Incarnate Son of God suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, dead and buried, and descended into Hell.

Rev. 1. 5, 6. Now unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father: To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON

Vol. I. Sermon the Twentieth. 8227

SERMON XIII.

ON THE

Fifth Article

OF THE

APOSTLES CREED.

1 Cor. xv. 4.

—*He rose again the Third Day, according to the Scriptures.*

THE *Humiliation* of our Redeemer, in his *Incarnation* and *Passion*, having been consider'd; The next thing in the Order of that Description given of him in our *Creed* is His *Exaltation*, consisting of *Christ's* these Four Particulars, viz. His *Resurrection*, His *Exaltation* *Ascension*, His *Glorification*, and His *Coming to* *in his* *Judgment*.

His *Resurrection* is what we are now to speak to, as the first Branch of *Christ's Exaltation*, and his next Work in order to our Redemption, which is the Argument of the *Fifth Article* of our *Creed*, *Resurrexi-*

and the Positive Doctrine of St. Paul in the Text : Who, among the Prime or Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity here, in order to the Proof of his Assertion of a *General Resurrection of the Dead*, doth premise this, concerning the *Particular Resurrection* of our Lord. This is the main Foundation of the Whole Christian Doctrine, that gives and confirms the Credit of whatever our Saviour said or did; And therefore of great Concern for us all, both well to Understand and firmly Believe.

In the Words, as they stand in the Text and Creed, almost in the very same Terms together, we are at first View presented with Three Particulars. 1. The Action it self, or the *Resurrection*; *He rose again*. 2. The Verity, Reality, and Propriety of such Resurrection; *He rose from the Dead* (as our Creed, agreeable to other Places of Scripture, adds.) And, 3. The Circumstance of Time, or Distance of his Resurrection from his Death; *He rose again the Third Day*.

To Illustrate and Improve these things, I shall,

I. Explain the true *Notion* of a Proper Resurrection, and thereby shew plainly what we are to Understand by a *Rising from the Dead*.

II. Prove the *Truth* of Christ's Resurrection, according to the most strict and proper Import of that Word.

III. I shall inquire into that *Power*, by Virtue whereof this wonderful Work was effected.

IV. Take Notice of the *Time*, wherein it came to pass, as in the Text and Creed asserted.

V. Examine particularly the Design and Ends aimed at and accomplished herein. And

VI. I shall Hint the necessary Influence our Belief hereof will have upon our Life and Practice.

I. To explain the true Notion of a Proper Resurre-^{What a Re-}
ction, (whereby to shew plainly what we are to ^{surrection.}
understand and mean by a *Rising from the Dead*) a
very few Words will suffice; the thing it self be-
ing imply'd in the very Terms that express it:
being nothing but a *Revivification of that which was*
Dead. Which being applied in so peculiar and
absolute a Manner to our Lord, must necessarily be
understood to import these four things. 1. That
he once had Life. 2. That he was truly deprived
of that Life by a Proper Death. 3. That he after-
wards return'd from such Death to that very Life
again. And 4. That he never so Dyed again af-
terwards.

By having *Life*, is meant no more than a Vital
Union of Soul and Body; without which there
can be no *Death*, which only consists in a Dissolu-
tion of such Union; the Re-union whereof is
therefore called a *Resurrection*; and its future In-
dissolubleness constitutes it a *Resurrection from the*
Dead: By which we mean a *Restoration to Life from*
Death to an Immortal State never to Die any more.
This is the very Doctrine of our Text and Creed,
publish'd by Christ's Apostles to the World, in
which strict Sense he is to be believed by us to *rise*
again from the Dead.

II. To prove the Truth whereof; as it is our next
Business so is it doubtless of the most serious and
important Concern in the World to be well assu-
red of it: It being the greatest Article of Christi-
anity; the Prop and Pillar of our Faith, that bears
up the whole Body of that Divine Institution,
which

*The Truth
of Christ's
Resurrecti-
on.*

which once removed or shaken, would necessarily sink by its own Weight into Confusion and Ruine. All the Truth and all the Benefit of our Religion being the Consequent of Christ's Resurrection. If he Rose not, then was he an Impostor, and our Religion a Fable, and *we that profess it, were of all Men most miserable.* And therefore, of all the Articles of the Christian, Faith, we are most concern'd to be well Inform'd and well assured of this; in his *Life*, in his *Death*, in his *Revivification*, and in his *Immortality* whereof a Proper Resurrection consists.

1. That Christ had before his Death, a *Proper Life*, arising from the Union of Soul and Body, is as certain as his *Humanity*, which he Demonstrated in all the Faculties and Passions and Infirmities and Necessities consequent upon or incident to a Mortal Life. So that we are as sure he Lived by a real proper Human Life, while he made his Abode here on Earth, as we can be assured that there ever was any Man Living besides our selves: Being, the very same Jesus, who was *Conceived*
 Act. 2. 22. *Born and Lived as we do; a Man approved of God among the Jews, by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs which God, did by him in the midst of them, as they themselves also Knew.* And therefore, if ever such an One Dyed, it must be by a Deprivation of Life, in the same manner as other Men are said to die when Soul and Body are Disunited.

2. That thus also our Saviour Dyed, is no less another Article of our Faith, distinctly Profess'd by us, though necessarily included in this; a *Resurrection* being a Recovery from a State only of such a *Death*. For though the Soul doth still exist in such a separate State, and lives no less

less out of the Body than in it; yet is not that the Life of a Man, enjoy'd before Death, but purely of the Soul, which is but a Part of him. So that while the *Soul* Lives, the *Man* may be Dead; and such a separate Life is really a State of Death. And in this State was our Blessed Redeemer when he Dyed upon the Cross: His *Soul descending into Hell* [the Mansion of separate Spirits] and his *Body being Buried in the Grave* [the usual Receptacle of Dead Corps] His Principal Constituent Parts being really separated and diversly disposed of, as a Man really then Dead, and as they could be in no other State save that of Death. For that his *Soul and Body* were disunited, appeared by the Mortal Wound given him by that *Spear* that fetch'd out *Blood and Water* from his Side: From the Opinion of all the Spectators, and Satisfaction of his Watchful Enemies: By his *Yeilding up the Ghost* so publicly, and being but what was foretold concerning him, both by himself and Ancient Prophecies. And that his *Soul* was in *Hades* thereupon (as other Deads Mens Souls are, when separated and in a State of Death) is apparent from what he foretold the Penitent *Thief*, when he promised him that he should *that Day be with him in Paradise*; Which could not be, had he yet remained United to his Body; and therefore could be no where else than in the happiest, though imperfect, Circumstances of the State of Souls Departed. And finally, that his Body was disposed of as a Proper Corps, and no longer treated as containing the least Spark of Life or Union to the Soul, appears from his being wound up in Grave-Cloths, and the Preparation made for his Embalming, and the Publickness of his Burial, None being Ignorant where he was laid,

or suspecting that his Body was either Changed or Buried alive. So that his Death was notorious, and never doubted of, or question'd while he continued in that State; from which, if ever he returned, it must consequently be by a Proper and Certain *Resurrection; Rising from the Dead*. And that Christ did so, depends upon the Proof of his ever living again after such his Death, there being no other Return or *Resurrection from Death*, than to the *Life* deprived of thereby. And therefore, as *Death* consisted in the *Separation of Soul and Body*, (the *Soul* existing a naked Ghost in *Hades*, and the *Body* remaining a Senseless Corps in the *Grave*) so the *Resurrection* must consist of the Reunion of the very same *Soul* and *Body* that before were so separated: The *Soul* returning out of *Hades*, and the *Body* from the *Grave*, unto such a Vital Union as *Death* had before dissolved; thereby restoring to Man the *Life* which he had been deprived of by *Death*, whereby he not only *Lives again*, but *Lives the very same Person* he was before he Dyed: Otherwise it would not be a Proper *Resurrection*, but really a *New Creation*.

3. That *Christ Lived again after his Death*, implies our Assurance of these two things; Not only that he *Revived*, but that being *Revived*, he was the very same Person he was before he dyed; Each whereof is past doubt.

For that he *Revived or Lived again*, we are assured by all the most unexceptionable Testimony that any Matter of Fact can possibly be capable of. For he was seen *Alive*, even by those who had before seen him *Dead*. His *Body* was not to be found in the *Grave*; His *Soul* had again inspirited it; And he appeared as much alive to them that saw him now, as ever he had done to any that saw

saw him before, when they were sure he was alive: For he Discours'd with them, Eat with them, and was Touch'd and Handled by them, and in this Visible open Manner Convers'd among them for the Space of Forty Days.

They that Knew him before, were convinc'd that it was *the very same Person* that had Dyed: And *Thomas*, that would not believe at first, had such an undeniable Argument given him, as extorted his free Confession of him to be his very *Lord and his God*. Neither was this question'd by any but the *Jews*, who had bribed the Soldiers that watched the Dead body, to report what they knew was false, and had truly first inform'd them of from their own Eye-Witness. The Earthquake could not be dissembled; The Apparition of Angels was visible; The Stone's Remove was manifest; and the Absence of the Body was not denyed; But the Mercenary Soldiers were hired to say, That *while they slept, his Disciples came by Night and stole him away*. But what will not Men say, when they are resolv'd to say any thing but the Truth? If they were asleep, how came they to know when or how, or by whom he was convey'd thence? Or why ran they away from their Watch; and did not stay to prevent and secure the Body from being removed which they had the Charge of; and who wanted neither Power nor Obligation to have done so, had it been possible? Neither was this the Report but of those Faithless Profligate Wretches, that were ready to say any thing to Save and Benefit themselves. Whereas the Contrary was attested by Others, who were unexceptionable Witnesses far exceeding them for their, *Number, Ability, and Honesty*, to the Peril of their very Lives, against the most discouraging

Diffi-

Difficulties, and yet with the most Miraculous Acceptance and Success, to this very Day, in the World. From the due Consideration of all which it cannot possibly be reasonably doubted, that *Christ*, after a Proper Death, which deprived him of a true Natural Life, did return from such Death to that very Life again: and consequently *rose again* by a Proper *Resurrection*; which also was more peculiarly so, because

4. *He never so Dyed again afterwards.* Having hereby so dissolved the Bands of death, as never to come under its Power more; as all besides him, that ever *rose from the Dead*, are concluded to have done. Others have been *raised*, (as *Lazarus* and the *Widow's Son*, &c.) but it was to die again; But *Christ* rose, not only from Death, but from Mortality, to live for ever; and re-assumed his Body, never to put it off any more; and so herein became the only *First-Fruits of the Resurrection*; not Temporal, but that Eternal one, that is to restore the Life we lost in *Adam*: when *Death, the last Enemy, shall be destroyed*; which is the *Victory* that God giveth us over him *through our Lord Jesus Christ*, who not only overcame his Power for us in *Rising again*, but divested him of it in that he never *dyed more*, carrying away the Life he had recovered triumphant into the Immortal State and Bliss of Heaven.

Rom. 6. 9.

By what
Power
Christ rose.

III. *Inquire we now into that Power, by Virtue whereof this wonderful Work was effected; which the Text and Creed plainly ascribe to that of Himself, for as much as neither say that he was raised, but that He rose; agreeable to what our Lord had predicted concerning it, when he said, Destroy this Temple (meaning his Body) and in three Days I will raise*

Jo. 2. 19.

raise it up. And again, I lay down my Life, that I might take it up again. No Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self: I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again. Upon this account he seems to have been stiled the Resurrection and the Life: Which, though also in other Scriptures, is ascribed to God; and Christ said to be raised up by him; and therefore supposed by some to do nothing more in the raising of himself, than only to get up and come out of the Grave when God had given him Life again; Yet this, as it falls infinitely short of Christ's meaning, by what he said, to give the Jews a Sign whereby to convince them that he was the Messiah; so it is intended to teach us that the Power by which he rose, was purely Divine, and that this Power was in himself, and that therefore he was not only a Man subject to the same Infirmities as we are, in which respect none but God could restore him to Life again when he was Dead; but that he was equal to the Father, being the Son of God, and therefore was able to do all that the Power of God can do, and to raise himself. And therefore our Apostle observes, that he was declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness by the Resurrection from the Dead. 10. 17, 18. Ads 2. 24. Rom. 1. 4.

IV. The Time wherein, after his Death, he thus Rose again to Life, is expressly determin'd here to the Third Day: Which being understood Synecdochically (according to the Jewish Custom of reckoning their Days, a Part being taken for a whole Day and Night) as its Verity and Propriety will be manifested, so will its seeming Harshness of Accordance with all the other Expressions, relating the same Event, easily be digested and un-

understood. For the *Jews*, after the Manner of
 Gen. 1. 5. *Moses*, computing their Days from the Evening
 of the precedent to the Evening of the following
 one; And *Christ* dying on the *Friday*, before the
 Evening that began their *Saturday*, the Part of
 that Day was took for the Whole, and therefore
 including in it the Evening, which began it, and
 concluded the *Thursday*; and he lying in the
 Grave all *Friday* Night, which began their *Satur-*
day, the second Day and Night ended, where the
 Evening on *Saturday* began; which beginning
 their First Day of the Week or *Sunday*, and
Christ continuing in his Grave that Night and the
 dawning of the following Morning, therefore is
 he said as (strictly) to *Rise on the third Day*, so
 (figuratively) to have been *three Days and Nights*
in the Heart of the Earth; as *St. Matthew* express-
 es it, answerable to what was typify'd of him by
Jonas his being *three Days and three Nights in the*
Whale's Belly; so was the *Son of Man* *three Days*
and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth; *Christ*
 rising again on the *third Day*, and having been bu-
 Mat. 12. 40. ried *three Days*, in the same sense he had before
 Lu 2. 46. been sought by *Joseph* and his Mother; when af-
 ter *three Days*, they found him in the Temple; mean-
 ing the *third Day* of his tarrying behind in *Jeru-*
salem; and as that *Ague* is commonly called *Ter-*
tian which comes every other Day.

Why he
 rose.

V. The Design and Ends aimed at, and accomplish-
 ed herein, were,

1. The fulfilling hereby what God before had shewed
 by Prophecies and Types concerning *Christ*, both as to
 his Resurrection in General, and this determinated
 Time of accomplishing it in Particular. Which is
 what the Apostle asserts in the Text, of him, who
 dyed

died for our Sins according to the Scriptures, that he also rose again the Third Day according to the same Scriptures, presignifying this no less than that, as necessary to be fulfilled herein for illustrating the Veracity, Wisdom and Providence of God. Thus the first Prediction of the *Messias*, denoting him to suffer, restraining the Bruise he should receive from the Serpent wholly to his Heel, intimated it either not to be Deadly, or as Recoverable as if it were not. *Isaiah* spoke of his being taken from his Prison (meaning his Grave) from whence, as from a Womb, coming into Life, the Psalmist figuratively express'd it, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*; But he more clearly spoke hereof, when he not only expressed the thing, but so as to intimate its Circumstance of Time also, in limiting Christ's being in the Grave to so short a Space as not thereby to see Corruption, which yet in Course of Nature had been unavoidable after a longer Time than that of Three Days (when as *Lazarus* was concluded to have stunk having been dead four Days) whereto is reducible that of *Hosea*, saying, *After two Days he will revive us, and in the third Day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his Sight*. This also was exactly Typified by *Adam's* awaking from Sleep, as a Type of the Second *Adam's* from Death; by *Sarah's* conceiving when old; *Isaac's* being sacrificed, and yet living; (and that too by a Deliverance computed to happen on the third Day after his being devoted, by God and *Abraham*, to Death) *Joseph's* being taken out of the Pit, and lifted up out of the Dungeon; as was also *Jeremiah*, and *Daniel* out of the Den of Lions. But especially (because as referred to, as to a Sign, by Christ himself) by *Jonah's* being taken out of the Belly of the Whale, after three Days.

Gen. 3. 15.

Is. 53. 8.

Ps. 2. 7.

— 16. 10.

Jo. 11. 39.

Hos. 6. 2.

Gen. 22.

12. Heb.

11. 14, 18,

19.

Jon. 2. 10.

Mat. 12.

Days 40.

Days and three Nights : In Congruity to all which expresse Prophecies and Types, foretelling and representing it ; it thus behaved Christ, as to suffer, *Lu. 24. 46.* to rise from the dead (as he himself teaches) the *And by so doing, was also,*

2. He demonstrated to us the Reality of his death, and Necessity of his Exaltation for it. Who, as he was necessitated to die in order to be Rewarded ; so was it not expedient for him, as not to Rise too suddenly, lest it might have been doubted whether ever he had been really dead ; so neither to defer too long lest his Disciples being held in Suspence, or the Enemy's Watch having been removed from his Grave, or the Talk of his Crucifixion grown stale, any might doubt whether he rose with the same body that dyed ; therefore not staying many Days (or any longer than while just the Verity of his Death was once sufficiently proved) before he rose to receive the Reward immediately due upon his Passion, *he rose on the third Day.* Hereby again,

3. He Demonstrated his Divinity; which though he had done by the Miracles he had wrought in his Life-time ; yet, as the Malicious blasphemously ascribed them to the Power of the Devil, so the Incredulous still wanted and required some some further Evidence, saying, *Joh. 2. 18. 19.* *What Sign shewest thou, seeing thou dost these things ?* To which the Answer was, *Destroy this Temple (i. e. The Sacred Body of our Lord, wherein the Divinity really dwelt) and in three Days I will raise it up ;* Referring to his Resurrection, as a greater Evidence of his being, what he pretended, *the Son of God,* than all the Miracles wrought in his Life-time ; beyond which nothing further could or should be done for Conviction of the Obstinate ;

nate ; and on the Event of which the Credit of all the other Proof depended ; this being foretold and fix'd as the last and great *Sign* of his Veracity which could never possibly have come to pass had Christ been an Impostor ; and which therefore being effected, sufficiently declares him to be the Son of God with Power, even (as the Apostle expresses it) by the Resurrection from the Dead. Rom. i. 4.

Neither doth this Death on the Cross more assure us of his Humanity, than his Resurrection from the Dead demonstrates his Divinity. Hereby is

4. Fully established the Truth of Christianity ; To which, as Christ Sealed by his Blood, so God testified by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead. It being the only Religion so confirm'd ; putting an End to the Mosaick Dispensation ; and assuring that now there is no other Way to Salvation, than what the Lord Jesus hath taught, who by his Resurrection, being proved to be the Son of God, His Doctrine must necessarily be true and from God, and *He the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. So that if we believe his Resurrection, we cannot deny anything of his Doctrine. Our Belief of *that* inferrs our Belief of *this*. And therefore is it proposed as the One Article of Faith sufficient to a Man's Salvation, *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus: (saith the Apostle) and believe in thine Heart, that God raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved.* Because the Acknowledgment hereof, is owning the whole Gospel, and the indispensable Obligation that is upon us to Obedience there-to in Order to Salvation. For this purpose was the Resurrection of our Lord effected, whereby further,

5. The Honour of Professing it might be vindicated ; by thus effectually removing the scandal of the Cross, which obstructed the Belief of his being the Son of God as he pretended. For, to the Jew it was an insupe-

superable *Stumbling-Block*, and to the *Gentile* ridiculous *Foolishness*, to addict themselves to the Service, and profess to be the Followers of one that dyed upon a Gibbet, in a scandalous manner, among Thieves, and whose Life was less valued by the Rulers of his own Nation, than that of a barbarous Murderer. But the *Resurrection*, not only wiped off this Disgrace; but added a peculiar Lustre and Glory to the Sacredness of the Person of Christ; whereby it no longer remains a Folly or Disgrace to Honour whom God hath so highly Honoured, but it is the singular Reputation of our Profession, that him we serve was, from the lowest Pitch of Infamy, exalted to the highest State of Glory. And we challenge all the World to instance in any Lawgiver or Prince equal to him herein; who, after all their Authority and Achievements, have submitted to, and yet remain under the Power of Corruption, that hath spoiled them of all, and blotted out their Remembrance, except what they have got in Story, which always tell us that they are dead. Whereas our Lord is risen from the Dead, never ceasing to Rule, or needing any Successor in his Kingdom, whose Throne is for ever and ever, and whom God hath anointed with the Oyl of Gladness above his Fellows, and all the Kings that ever were: So that none need now to be ashamed of being hereby warranted to Glory in the Cross of Christ, deriving such a Lustre from the Splendour of his *Resurrection*. A further, and a most considerable, End and Design whereof, is taught us to be

Rom. 4.
25.

6. The Assurance of his having compleated our Justification: He was delivered for our Offences (says St. Paul) and was raised again for our Justification. Hereby God declared: That he was satisfied, and had accepted him as a Propitiation for the Sins of the
the

the World, and thereby remitted of the Rigour of the Law that had in *Adam* sentenced all Mankind to die Eternally; delivering us from a State of Condemnation, and putting us into a Possibility of living again after Death for ever, upon our due Improvement of this great Mercy, according to the New Covenant of the Gospel. This acquitting us of our former Condemnation, offers us a New Trial for our Salvation; so that if we die not now for our own continued Impenitence and personal Faults, we are assured that we shall not be hurt by the Sentence of Condemnation that doomed all Mankind in *Adam*, to Death eternal. Because *Christ* who bore the Punishment of that Sentence for us, was discharged therefrom by his Resurrection; which assures us of the Success of his Undertaking for us, and that though Death yet has Power to Arrest us as Sinners, yet it cannot hold us for ever, because our Pardon is procured, our Debt paid, and our Surety discharged. *Who then, says the Apostle, shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again.*— And justly as a Consequence hereof, is declared,

Rom. 8.
33, 34.

7. The Dominion acquired over us by *Christ*. Who to this end, we are taught, both dyed, and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and of the Living. Rising to take Possession of the Kingdom he had purchased by his Death. And therefore, before his Ascension, he tells his Disciples, that all Power was given unto him in Heaven and in Earth. Hereby is assured to us

—14. 9.

Mar. 28. 13

8. The Certainty of our Resurrection: Whereof he is the First-Fruits; who laying down his Life for us, with his own took up our Lives also from

1 Cor. 15.
20.

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the

- Col. 1. 18. the State of Death; being so the First-born from the Dead, and we the Children of the Resurrection; whose Nature is already raised from the Dead in Christ, *Actually*; and whose Persons are *Potentially* designed thereto. In which Sense we are said to be *Risen with him*; even by our Mystical Union to him as our Head, whose Members we are, and in whom we are as much *Risen from the Dead*, as we were before *Dead in Adam*; Both acting alike as Publick Persons: and as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive: Humanity being as much already restored to Immortality by the one's Satisfaction, as made Mortal by the Other's Transgression. And therefore, as we are *Actually* fallen with Adam, so we are no less *Risen with Christ*, being equally related to his Person, and concerned in his Acting. Besides that, by the Virtue and Efficacy of his *Resurrection*, a Way is made for ours, and with whom we are *Risen*, as we thence derive a Possibility thereof to our selves; whereby a Power is obtained to Raise us, and a Promise made to us, and a Pattern and Example set before us thereof. So that if we believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again: Even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. The Resurrection of our Saviour was further intended,
9. Lastly, To promote our Regeneration; Which is a Resurrection of our Souls from the Death of Sin unto a Newness of Life; and is the *First Resurrection* in Order to secure to us the Glory of the *Second*; frequently inculcated by the Writers of the *New Testament*, teaching Christ's Resurrection as a Practical Doctrine, Typified by our Baptism; wherein as Immersion very significantly represented our Death with Christ, so our being brought again from under the Water, denoted our Resurrection with him
- 1 Thel. 4. 14.
- Rev. 20. 6.

him to a Newness of Life; according to what our Catechism teaches us to call the *Inward Grace* of this Sacrament, a *Death unto Sin*, and a new Birth unto Righteousness, and as the *Apostle* expresses it, Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the Faith of the Operation of God, who hath raised him from the Dead. And again more expresly, We are buried (says he) with Christ by Baptism unto Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life. The very End of Christ's Resurrection, inferring, it seems, no less a present Restoration of Soul than future Renovation of the Body; and losing its Efficacy as to us, if it influence not our Hearts to improve our Conversations. If therefore (argues the *Apostle* again) ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,—Disciples of the Risen Jesus being necessarily supposed and intended to be risen with him; being represented to be Followers of the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth: A Sensual Terrene Soul not partaking of our Lord's Resurrection, but its Condemnation still abideth, and Death retaineth an intire Power over it. And (as one expresseth it) to continue among the Graves of Sin now that Christ is Risen, is to incur that Reprehension of the Angel, *Why seek ye the Living among the Dead?* And implies a Denial either that Sin is Death, or that Christ is risen from the Dead. Therefore is it only for the Dead to bury the Dead; but by no means allowable for Christians to bury him who rose from Death, that such might Live; and are therefore called upon to awake if they sleep and to arise from the Dead that Christ may give them Light.

Col. 2.11

Rom 6.4

Col 3. 1.

Rev. 14.4.

The Use
hereof.

VI. The necessary Influence of all this actually Believed, will be manifested in our Lives, by a growing Fruitfulness of all Christian Graces, which from this Living Root will naturally spring and flourish to Maturity, if duely manag'd by good Husbandry; *Christ's Resurrection* being the Corner Stone, the Pillar and Foundation of the whole *Christian System*; which being firm, nothing can Shake or Deface. More especially and immediately it tends,

Luk. 24.
41.

1. To beget in us great Exultation of Joy and Gratitude. The News whereof was so surprizing to the Disciples, that it seem'd to them to be too Good to be True, (who believed not for Joy:) and what a Joy is it to us, that we are assured of its Truth no less than Goodness! Whereby we see our Last Enemy destroy'd, our Champion a Conqueror, our Debt paid, Condemnation revers'd, our Ransom accepted, Redemption compleated, the Prison broke down, and the Kingdom of Heaven opened to all Believers! Such Good Tidings of great Joy, require and deserve no less our Celebrations of Praise for the Resurrection that Confirm'd and Concluded the great Work of our Redeemer to save us; than they obtain'd the Angels Congratulations for the Birth, that began and usher'd it in. It also

2. Highly recommends our great Exemplar to our careful Imitation; whose Steps thus led to the highest Pitch of Honor, which while we follow them by his Resurrection in our Nature is ascertain'd to us our Resurrection as the Consequent and Reward of our Obedience also. For this
is

is a Demonstration of a Glorious Immortality to be expected by us, that will raise our Minds above present Enjoyments, support our Patience under all the Difficulties and Troubles of this World, and encourage Endeavours to an Holy Life. And what could God do more, or Man need and Desire by way of Motive and Argument, towards the Profelyting the World to Religion, than he hath done by thus ascertaining our future Happiness by the Resurrection of his Son Jesus?

Such then being the Doctrine hereof (in its Nature, Truth, Cause, Time, Design and Influence) it will be easie to sum up the full Import of what we are to Mean, in our Profession to believe it: viz. *I am verily perswaded and sure, that the same Jesus Christ who was crucified, dead and buried, did by his own Power, on the Third Day, Live again in the Union of the same Soul and Body he had lived in before, and by the Separation whereof he Dyed on the Cross, according to the Types and Prophecies which went before of him, and his own Infallible Prediction. Whereby I am the more ascertain'd that he was really Dead, and convinced that he was the Son of God, that his Doctrine is True, my Profession of it Honourable, my Person Justified and Acquitted from a Necessity of Dying eternally, and that Christ hath an intire and just Dominion hereby over me. By whom I also expect to Rise from the Dead, and am called at present to a Newness of Life. Which Resurrection, as I ought greatly to Rejoyce at, so I ought earnestly to Endeavour after this Newness of Life from such Encouragement. And in this Sense, and to such Purposes, do I believe that*

Jesus Christ, on the Third Day rose from the Dead.

Heb. 13.
20, 21.

Now the God of Peace that brought again from The Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, Make you perfect in every Good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight, through Jesus Christ; To whom be Glory for ever and ever, Amen.

SER.

SERMON XIV.
ON THE
Sixth Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Mark xvi. 19.

*So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them,
He was received up into Heaven, and sat on
the Right Hand of God.*

WHICH Words contain the History of the Two next Degrees of our Redeemer's *Exaltation* consequent upon his *Resurrection*. After which (for the Confirmation of Faith, and Constitution of his Church, having for the Competent Space of Forty Days, convers'd among his Followers, and fully settled and finished what was requisite to be done by him on the Earth) *He was received up into Heaven, and sat on the Right Hand of God.* This is what is profess'd to be be-

liev'd by us in the *Sixth Article* of our Creed, in much the like Words, *viz. He ascended into Heaven, And sitteth on the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty*; consisting of these two distinct Parts; The one (as they term it) *Transient*, namely his *Ascension*, being the Way or Passage to the Glory he was Exalted to; The other *Permanent*, being the End of such Passage, or the Glory it self he was brought to thereby, *viz. his Session*. The *Import*, and *Certainty*, and *Design*, and *Influence* hereof comes now under our Consideration.

Christ's
Ascension.

I. Begin we with the *Ascension* of our Lord (the *Transient* Part of his *Exaltation*, or Way and Passage to the Glory he was exalted to, expressed in the Text by his being *Received up into Heaven*, and in our Creed by his *Ascending* thither, wherein, for Explanation of its *Import*, three things are distinguishable, requiring our Notice, without Difficulty in any of them.

1. The first is the *Person* [He] of whom this is meant; Even the same Lord Jesus Christ that Suffered, Dyed, and Rose again from the Dead; who being both God and Man, reunited in the same Soul and Body into one Humane Nature, inseparable from the Divine, was himself translated hence, in such his very proper Person; in Opposition to the several *Heresies* of Old; whereof some affirmed that his *Body* void of *Sense*; some only his *Soul* and not his *Body* as yet; and some both *Body* and *Soul*, yet as separated from his *Divinity*, was it that the *Ascension* is predicated of? Whereat nothing can be more evident, than that the *Person* of our Lord is intended to be conceived of by us in this, as in the other preceding *Articles*, whereof his *Humanness*, in Conjunction with his *Deity*, is the proper Subject.

2. The

2. *The second thing*, of distinct Notice further Explaining the Import of this, is the *Action*; differently express'd as in our Text and Creed, so in the Account transmitted to us hereof by several of the Inspired Writers. It being said, *He was received up*, and *He Ascended*, and *He was carried up*, and *He went into Heaven*; All implying the same thing to inform us that this Remove was by a proper *Local Motion*, not of his *Divinity* (which possesses all Places, and therefore being every where is not subject to the Imperfection of removing any whither) but of his *Humanness*, which, though in Union therewith, was (according to that Nature common to all Men) so in one Place, that it was not in another at the same time; so that he who before was Locally present here on Earth, and was not then so present in Heaven, became substantially present in Heaven, and no longer Locally present on Earth. Which is what the *Angels* plainly express in the Assurance they gave hereof to his *Disciples*, telling them that *He* Aa. i. 11.
was taken up from them, with whom he had often convers'd after his *Resurrection*, *into Heaven*. Being Personally with them, when he was not in Heaven; and taken from them being present there; which is the only Intention signified by the various Expressions of an *Ascension*; not regarding so much the *Manner*, as only the *Locality* of Motion.

3. *The third and remaining Particular* to complete the Notion whereof is the *Termination* of Christ's *Ascension*; express'd to be *Heaven* in the most Emphatical Sense of that Word, as signifying the most Glorious Place of God's Residence, where he especially exerts both his Superlative Majesty and Goodness; being the *Light which* Tim. 6.
Mat. 16.

Man can approach unto, wherein he who only hath Immortality dwelleth, and at whose Right Hand are
 Ps. 16. 11. *Pleasures for evermore.* To which therefore our
 Heb. 4. 14 *Lord ascending, he is said to have passed through the*
Heavens (as it ought rather to be rendred, than
into the Heavens, ἀναβήτα ἰς οὐρανόν:) To be
 —7. 26. *made [or advanced] higher than the Heavens, be-*
ing received up into the Heaven that is higher than
all Inferiour Places which are called the Heavens:
 Jo. 20. 17. *To ascend to his Father: To enter into Glory; Into*
 Heb. 9. 12. *the Holy Place; Into that within the Veil; Even*
 —6. 19 *where he is said to have been before, before he was*
 Jo. 6. 62. *Incarnate. Thither, from this humble Earth,*
did our Lord Locally, Visibly, and Triumphant-
ly transfer himself in our Nature, to the highest
Top of Glory and Felicity, not depositing his Bo-
dy in the Sun, as other Hereticks dotingly of old
affirmed.

Its Truth.

II. *The Certainty of such an Ascension we have ra-*
tified by the Testimony of those unexceptionable
Witnesses that reported his Resurrection, though
far more in Number by some Hundreds, and far
otherwise Inform'd by Ocular Demonstration.
For whereas our Saviour never, that we read of,
appeared to his Disciples after his Resurrection, but
by Surprize and unexpectedly, except only upon
the Occasion of assembling them to be Witnesses of
his Ascension, which was by his own solemn Ap-
 Mat. 28. 16 *pointment (as St. Matthew tells us) to a set Place in*
Galilee; He never, to be sure, was seen by so ma-
ny together as here at this time; where and when
none would be wanting that had either Faith or
Curiosity of seeing Miracles; and where it is sup-
posed the five hundred Brethren, mentioned by St.
 1 Cor. 15. 6 *Paul, were together at once; and of which St. Luke*
telling

telling the Story (in the *Acts*) in a peculiar manner, therefore expresses this his Appearance, by *his being assembled together with them*, It being the only appointed Meeting, upon Notice and Expectation before hand, that ever Christ had with his Disciples after his *Resurrection*. And therefore as in all Probability, much more Crowded, so they were capable of being least deceived or imposed upon. By which, as none could doubt of his being alive again after his Death, so were all assured of his *Ascension*; which they saw with their own Eyes, and beheld him as long as he could be seen, till a Cloud received him out of their Sight; and then they were satisfied by two *Angels* of his Reception into *Heaven*; who being Inhabitants of that Place, were able to deliver such Intelligence, and to inform whither our Lord went, when the Eyes of his Beholders here below could discern him no longer. Which also was confirm'd by the Miraculous Descent of the *Holy Ghost*, according to Christ's Promise; and which could no otherwise have been had. And whence finally he shewed himself afterwards to his First Martyr St. Stephen, and spoke to his first Miraculous Convert St. Paul; so that, as sure as ever he was seen upon Earth, are we ascertain'd that he is gone in our Nature, hence into *Heaven*.

III. The End and Design of which Miraculous Remove was, no doubt, in Compliance with the many Types and Prophecies prefiguring it; Testifying before-hand (as St. Peter assures) as the Sufferings of Christ, so the Glory that should follow; Which also our Lord himself much more ascertains in that sensible upbraiding of his Disciples with Infidelity after his *Resurrection*, O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe

Aa. 1. 4.

Vid. Light.

foot in loc.

Aa. 1. 9.

6.

It; Design.

1 Pet. 1. 11.

Luke 24.

25, 26.

believe all that the Prophets have spoken? Ought not
 Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into
 his Glory? Of this are reckoned to be Types, Isaac's
 Prosperous State after his being devoted to be
 sacrificed; Joseph's Advancement out of Prison;
 Joshua's surviving the Common Fate of his People
 to take Possession of the Promised Land; Enoch's
 and Elias's Translation; and the High Priest en-
 tering once a Year into the Holy of Holies. Hereof
 also David spoke Prophetically, where he menti-
 Pf. 68. 18. ons the Messiah's Ascending up on high, and leading
 Captivity Captive; and again, denoting the same,
 —24. 7. by Lift up your Heads O ye Gates, and be ye lift up ye
 everlasting Doors, and the Kingdom of Glory shall come
 in; where the literal Sense refers to the Entrance
 of the Ark into the Temple a Type hereof. To which
 II. 53. 13. *Isaiah* also refers when he foretels of his Man of
 Sorrows, that he shall be exalted and extolled, and be
 very high; (thus accumulating Words to reach the
 Height of Christ's Exaltation.) And which *Mi-*
 Mic. 2. 13. *caiah* is generally interpreted to speak of by these
 Words, The Breaker is come up before them: They
 have Broken up, and have passed through the Gates,
 and are gone out by it; and their Kings shall pass be-
 fore them, and the Lord at the Head of them. All
 which Scriptures that they might be fulfilled, our
 Lord not only Rose from the Dead, but Ascended also
 into Heaven. The same also is mentioned to be ne-
 cessary for his sending down the Gift of the Holy
 Ghost that was to Inceess him, as Advocate on
 Earth, to whom he was to give Place, and Com-
 mission to fill his Room here, for the Instruction,
 Direction Assistance, and Comfort of his Fol-
 Jo. 16. 7. lowers. Wherefore he told them, If I go not
 away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I de-
 part, I will send him unto you. Besides that, another
 Errand

Errand hereof was *To prepare Us a Place also with himself in Heaven*; It being only by the Virtue of his *Ascension* thither, that any Man ever did or ever shall comethither; by whom alone the *Kingdom of Heaven* is opened to all Believers. But the Principal End, comprehending all the rest was (what our *Text* and *Article of Faith* conjoyn here with, expressing a farther Degree of Christ's *Exaltation*, and the *Permanent Part* thereof, wherein such his Passage terminated, even) his *Session at the Right Hand of God, the Father Almighty*. For therefore did our Lord *Ascend into Heaven*, That he might there, and in that manner, receive the Crown of his Performances in the most Perfect *Glorification*. The *Import* and *Intent* whereof, I now proceed in like manner to Illustrate.

The Expression being *Metaphorical*, obligeth us to consider what we are to Understand, both by *God's Right Hand*, and what by Christ's *sitting* there. For God being a Spirit, to whom no Corporeal Parts are competent, the Mention of his *Right Hand* is only in Condescension to our Capacity and Mode of Expression; in a Figurative Sense, signifying either *Power*, (the *Hand* not only being the most Active Parts; but of the Hands the *Right*, by a general Custom, being most used, and becoming thereby most strong, is therefore eminently executive of Power) implied in St. Luke's manner of Expressing this, *Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the Right Hand of the Power of God*: Or signifying *Dignity* (the most Honourable Place among Men being at the *Right Hand*, by which Gifts are usually Given and Received) intimated by that of the *Author to the Hebrews*, *He sat down on the Right Hand of the Majesty on high, Being made so much better than the Angels, &c.* Or finally,

—14. 2.

Christ's Session.

Its Meaning.

Lu. 22. 69.

Heb. 1. 3, 4

finally, Signifying, in like manner, *Dominion* (being the Part that holds the *Scepter*, which is the Rod of Government) in which Sense *St. Peter* quotes the same thing, Prophetically spoken in the *Psalms*, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my Right Hand, until I make thy Foes thy Foot-stool*; And the *Author to the Hebrews* yet more expressly again teacheth, that we have such an *High Priest*, who is set on the *Right Hand* of the *Throne* of the *Majesty* in the *Heavens*. Christ's sitting there not determining any Posture of his Body (who is also said to stand at God's *Right Hand*, and in General Terms sometimes only said to be in *Heaven*.) But only his full and permanent Possession of such Power, Dignity, and Dominion wherewith he is there Glorified; who after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down on the *Right Hand* of God; Exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour; Seated in the *Heavenly Places*, Far above all *Principality*, and *Power*, and *Might*, and *Dominion*, and every Name that is named not only in this World, but also in that which is to come: All things being put under his Feet, and he given to be the Head over all things,—Implying all that is Good and Excellent in the most Eminent Degree of *Glorification*.

Design. The Intent or Ends whereof, was (in Conjunction with his *Ascension*, which introduced hereto) to fulfil those Ancient Types and Prophecies foreshewing it, (and above Mentioned) in order to his compleat Investiture in the Exercise of the Offices, and full Enjoyment of all the Privileges belonging to the *Mediatorship* of Prophet, Priest, and King; begun here on Earth, and still carried on by him in the Presence of God for us in Heaven. Whence, as our Prophet, he sent down the *Holy Ghost*, to instruct his Church in his Absence, and to be with

us in his stead, and which was not to be given till after Jesus was glorified; who, being by the Right Hand of God exalted, received the Promise of the Holy Ghost; and Gifts for Men, that the Lord might dwell among them; whereby they were enabled to propagate his Religion through the World as effectually, as if he had staid with them, and to fit themselves for those Mansions he was gone before to prepare for them. Where also, as our Great High Priest, he having offered one Sacrifice for Sins, is sat down, to appear in the Presence of God for us, to present there his Blood of Expiation before God himself (the Virtue whereof is perpetually advanced by his Session) to the full Effect of obtaining Mercy for us, and restoring us to the Divine Favour, through the Promise of God and his own Merits: Wherefore (as the Apostle teaches) he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them. So that as at first Christ shed his Blood, so now he continues to shew it, and to plead therewith at the Throne of Grace, in our Behalf, for Covenant-Mercies, on Covenant-Terms: Being the Mediator of the New Testament, and our Advocate with the Father; Impartially, Potently, and Willingly Attoning and Interceding on our Behalf, by whom alone we have Access to the Father, and wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. And there, finally, he also, as our King, hath entred into the full Possession of that Royal Majesty and Sovereignty he had Purchased by his Death; whereby he is made Head over all things to the Church; All Power being given unto him in Heaven and Earth; which he exerciseth thence (immediately by himself) in Giving Laws (being the one Law giver, who is able to save and to destroy.) In Protecting

from

Jo. 7. 39.

Act. 2. 33.

Ps. 68. 18.

Heb. 10.

12.

—9. 24.

—7. 25.

—9. 15.

1 Joh. 2. 1.

Eph. 2. 18.

—1. 6.

—1. 22.

Mat. 28. 18.

Jam. 4. 12.

1 Cor. 15. from all Enemies (*Reigning till he hath put all such under his Feet.*) And in Judging the World to their Present Doom at Death, and to the full Con-
 Jo. 9. 22. summation of it at the Last Day: (*The Father, now, judging no Man, but hath committed all Judg- ment to the Son.*) And which, also, he exercises, Mediate, by his Bishops and Pastors who are the Ambassadors and Officers of his Kingdom, his De- puties and Substitutes here on Earth.

In such Sense, and for such Ends did our Lord terminate his *Ascension* from the Earth, in his *Ses- sion at the Right Hand of God, the Father Almighty in Heaven.*

IV. *The Effect and Influence of all which, Actual- ly believed, is,*

The Use hereof to begot Faith

1. *To Confirm and Recommend our Faith.* For because our Lord is Ascended to be Glorified with God, therefore are we the more perswaded that he came from God; And the more we are perswaded hereof, in such his Absence and Di- stance from us, the more acceptable will be our Faith, thus both Caus'd and Crown'd hereby.

Jo.

2. *This also tends to excite our Joy and Comfort;* Because of the Triumph of our Champion over all our Enemies; the great Advancement of our Nature in him; the transporting Satisfaction of having so good a Friend in so high a Place and great Power; on whose Help we may depend, and under whose Patronage we shall be secure in eve- ry State, at all Times and in all Places, so that be our present Condition what it will, the Exalted Condition of our Lord is able to sweeten and
 Phil. 4. 4. make it tolerable to us; *Rejoycing in the Lord alway,* considering where he is, and what our Concern is therein. This further will

3. Re-

3. *Revive and Corroborate Christian Hope*; even ^{Hope.} of that Glory Christ hath took Possession of, and fate down in with our Nature, as an Earnest and Pledge of the Reward we shall receive *in due time, if we faint not.* For so the *Apostle* argues, that as God hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath ^{Eph. 2. 5, 6.} raised us up together by Virtue of his Resurrection, so hath he by Virtue of his Glorification made us sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus. And this then

4. Is exceeding Beneficial both to *Engage and* ^{Obedience.} *Direct our Obedience.* That, from his Glorification; This, from his *Ascension* from us thereto. For seeing our Lord is now so highly Exalted; both *Fear* and *Desire* thence move us to Obey him. There being great Reason to *Fear the offending him to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given*, and whose Will is executed by the irresistible *Right Hand of God*, that can easily check us in our Bad Courses, and will surely Chastise us for our Disobedience. And there being also great Encouragement to *Desire to Imitate* his perfect Obedience in all things to the Divine Will, considering what a special Regard God hath declared he beareth thereto, by his so amply rewarding and highly dignifying the Practice thereof in him. We (says the *Apostle* therefore) see Jesus, — for the Suffering of Death, ^{Heb. 2. 9.} crowned with Glory and Honour: Seeing him not only as an Object of our Speculation, but as a Pattern of our Practice, and Ground of our Encouragement, as a Pledge of like Recompence proposed to us, in Proportion, answerable to our Imitation of his Exemplary Obedience and Patience; Looking — ^{12. 1.} up unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the
S
Right

Right Hand of the Throne of God. So that considering either the *Power* or *Happiness* of Christ's *Exaltation* in Heaven, there cannot be wanting an Argument to induce and support us to *Run the Race* (after him) *that is set before us also.*

And whence, as we are thus *Engaged*, so are we also, in a great Measure, *Instructed* in our *Obedience*: Because seeing our Lord hath arrived to this Pitch of Glory by his *Ascension* from us here on Earth, fixing his Residence at the *Right Hand of God*, and therefore being hence assured that he is *there* and not *here*, we are taught the Nature of that Obedience which only will be accepted from us with God, consistent and agreeing herewith, in these five Particulars.

Through
Christ a-
lone.

I. That it be all perform'd by us to God in and through him alone, as our only *Mediator*, between God and Man, by whom only there can be Access and Acceptance. This being the End of Christ's Session at God's *Right Hand*, and the Errand of his *Ascension* thither; where we are sure he is; and by whom God has prescribed all our Addresses to be made in this Way of Application to himself; and from whom alone, such frail and sinful Services, as ours are, can come worthy before the Most Holy God, who hath not only the Acceptableness of his Person to prefer, but the Merit of his Sacrifice too to atone for them. Therefore as Man can no otherwise address God by any Service but by a *Mediator*, so is there no other *Mediator* capable of rendering so frail and deficient a Service acceptable but Jesus Christ; who is in the highest Power and Dignity and Dominion both our *Intercessor* and *Redeemer* in Heaven. Whose *Glorification* is then rashly aspers'd by those who seek after other's *Mediation*, and are so far from applying to God by

by Him alone, that they presume to joyn with him all the Saints in Heaven; and more than, 'tis probable, are there; preferring the *Mediation* of some before him, using Multitudes of *Ave Marias* for one Invocation upon Christ. Although St. Paul expressly teaches, that *there is but one Mediator between God and Man; the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all*; and therefore is only that Obedience acceptable to God, that wholly is interested in his *Mediation* alone. And which

1. Tim. 2. 5, 6.

2. Ought to be so applyed, with the most awful Reverence by us: Agreeable to the Height of his Exaltation, and due to that his State of Majesty, wherein we are so nearly concern'd; and from which so great Honour is derived to our Nature; and in regard whereto the *Angels of God* are commanded to *Worship him, and every Knee to bow at his Name, and every Tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father*.

Reverence
118.

Heb. 1. 6.
Phil. 2. 10, 11.

3. It ought to be, moreover, a *Cheerful Obedience*: *Cheerful* Full of Confidence and Assurance of Faith and Hope, as doubting of no Success and Advantage thereby, if we be not wanting to our selves through our own Neglect thereof and Disregard thereto; *Having such an High Priest*, it becomes us not to come otherwise than boldly to the Throne of Grace; there being nothing to Deter, nothing to withhold us from *Cheerfully* addressing our selves to God by him for *Mercy and Grace* upon all Occasions, and at all Times.

Heb. 4. 14, 15.

4. It ought to be ever accompanied with an Intire Trust and Dependance upon his Care for us; Whose Ability and Willingness we are so abundantly assured of hereby. Allowing of no Anxious Fears, nor Use of any unlawful Means at any time upon whatever Occasion for our own Relief; Since, let

Fiducial

Rom. 8.
38, 39.

2 Tim. 2.
11, 12.

Spiritual
in oppositi-
on to

Ubiquita-
ries.

Consubstan-
tialists,
and Tran-
substantia-
tours.

things go how they will, *the Lord Reigns*, being *Ascended to*, and *sate down at the Right Hand of God*; and we and all his faithful People being safest, whilst we are doing our Duty and are in his Hands. Being therefore (with *St. Paul*) persuaded, that neither *Death*, nor *Life*, nor *Angels*, nor *Principalities*, nor *Powers*, nor *Things present*, nor *Things to come*, nor *height*, nor *depth*, nor any other *Creature*, shall be able to separate us from the *Love of God*, which is in *Christ Jesus our Lord*; being assured of the *Faithfulness* of this *Saying*, that if we be *dead with him*, we shall also *live with him*; If we *suffer*, we shall also *reign with him*. Finally,

5. That in no part or instance of our Obedience we admit or expect the Presence of Christ with us, any otherwise than in a purely Spiritual Sense: His *Ascension* and *Session at God's Right Hand*, necessitating his *Bodily Absence* from us; and the supposition of the contrary being therefore inconsistent with the Truth of this *Article of our Faith*, and a manifest corruption of the Purity of our Obedience. And, as such, is to be shunn'd the Erroneous Faith of the *German Ubiquitaries*, affirming Christ, according to his Humane Nature, Corporally to exist every where; And of the *Lutheran Consubstantialists*, and *Roman Transubstantiators*, affirming Christ's bodily Presence with or in the *Consecrated Elements of Bread and Wine*, in the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*: which, besides the Absurdity of the Thing it self, thwarting Reason, must needs render the Services of such grounded hereon Abominable for its Falsity, contradicting Faith. For if Christ's Bodily Presence and Local Abode be at the *Right Hand of God in Heaven*, then his Presence with us in any Ordinance on the Earth, must be by his Spirit only,

ly, which is his *Advocate*, to supply his Place and Absence, and to *abide with us for ever*, working Jo. 15. 26. the same effects, and conferring the same Graces that he himself would, were he personally upon Earth. As God he is (as he ever was) present every where; but as Christ, his Bodily Presence is totally withdrawn with him. In respect to which he is said to *have left the World*; To be Jo. 16. 28. *no more in the World*, whom we were not to have — 17. 11. *always with us*, as we have the Poor, from whom Mat. 26. we are Absent while in the Body, and necessitated 11. to depart hence to be with him, whom the Heavens 2 Cor. 5. 6. Phil. 1. 23. must receive, and contain Until the times of resti- Aq. 3. 21. tution, or Consummation of all things; whence Rom. 10. 6. there is no bringing Christ down from above, without ascending up into Heaven, and whence we expect him to come (by change of Place and Local Motion) to judge the *Quick and the Dead*. All which plainly implies his being bodily Present only in Heaven, and his being Absent from the Earth; whom therefore our Obedience must regard only as *spiritually Present* with us in his Ordinances here, agreeable to Reason, and the Analogy of Faith. Such a *Mediated, Useful, Cheerful, Confiding* and *Spiritual Service*, are we engaged thro *Fear* and *Desire* to express our Obedience to God in, from the Consideration and hearty Belief of the *Ascension and Glorification* of Jesus Christ his Son our Lord at *His right Hand*.

But the most immediate and important Aspect hereof, wherein all the other Influences of this Doctrine upon us concenter and end is, what the Scripture so very expressly hence inculcates, (and which therefore I have reserved, to leave with you as a Conclusion) even 5. *To elevate our As- Heavenly* *fections from the Earth whence our Lord is ascended, Min led* *after* *ness.*

after him to Heaven, where he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: And that upon this double and very considerable Account. In that it hence follows, that *nothing here on Earth can make us Happy*, and that *here the time of our Continuance is the shortest term of our Duration*. For Christ having placed our Nature in Heaven, wherein he Ascended from the Earth thither, *Nothing here below can possibly be our Happiness*, which is transplanted into another Country, both in our Nature and in our Saviour, for which we are designed, and whither we must follow him, and are therefore concern'd both as Men and Christians to Regard and Provide for. For since our Nature in Christ is in Heaven, our concerns are necessarily there also; and we have that State to provide for, as well as this, in order to secure the Happiness we stand in need of. For what is here below can but provide for our present Convenience while we remain here; which not being the only Place of our Abode, such Enjoyments are not the adequate Object of our Acquest. But our Nature being Ascended, our Concern ought to Ascend therewith, and we must have to do with *things that are above*, whither we are transplanted, and which may stand us in stead when every thing here beneath will fail and forsake us. And since from being *Earthy* we are hereby become *Heavenly*, it is but requisite our Conversations and Affections should be raised after our Natures to become Heavenly also. Especially since, as our Natures were exalted thus in Christ, so he ascended from us and abides therewith in Heaven; where it becomes his Followers to be continually looking after him, as having nothing on Earth worth their desire and pursuit, whilst he is absent hence, and bodily present

present only there. Indeed before our Lord's *Ascension* hence, Many of his Followers did seek after him here, where he was then only personally to be found, and thereby found many Earthly Emoluments by him, both for the satisfying of their Hunger and Cure of their Bodily Distempers. But now that he is gone hence and resides in Heaven, such *thoughts of Heart* and Expectations are changed concerning him. And those that adhere yet to him look for other things now from him; and promise to themselves Happiness, not here on Earth where he is not, but *Above* where he is; and where such *desire* and long to be *with him* as *far better* for them; and where they expect to be *for ever with the Lord*. And therefore Man's *Nature* being in Heaven, and *Christ* not on Earth, nothing here *below* can possibly make us Happy, which only may be had in Things that are *above*, and wherein we are most concern'd; because hence also it no less evidently appears, that *here the time of our Continuance is the shortest Term of our Duration*. So that be it how it will with us here *below*, this present State must quickly end, and will be over with us, because but Temporal and Mortal; and then it will not be what we *have been*, but what we *shall be* for ever, that will make us Happy or Miserable. For there is no Proportion between the shortness of this Life and the Eternity of the next; And we being made by *Christ's Ascent* hence in our Nature, both Capable and Necessitated to live the *next* as well as *this*, it will therefore also hence concern us to provide chiefly for the *next* while we are in *this*; where we shall be for ever, just as we now make Provision; that being the Effect of This, and This the Introduction to That Life.

Col. 3. 1.

And therefore though we are here *Below*, yet being not where we have long to stay, we can neither Hope to be Happy here, nor think ourselves without need of any other Happiness, while unprovided for the next State. Persons in our Circumstances are necessitated to provide more for the Future than the Present State, as being more concern'd and interested in it, for the sake whereof this Life is Principally intended. And since we are risen with *Christ*, and our *Nature* and *Interest* transferr'd hence into Heaven by him, we can neither answer the *End* of this, nor our *Capacity* for the next Life, nor be said to live either the Life of a *Man* or *Christian*, but by seeking those things which are above, where *Christ* sitteth at the *Right Hand* of *God* (as the Apostle Exhorts.) A Carnal sensual Life, that is wholly engaged and immers'd in Earthly Concerns, and intends no further Acquest than the Good Things of this World, is evidently the greatest Contradiction to the Exaltation of our *Nature* with *Christ* into Heaven. For if *Humanity* be raised; how can they be said to live like Men now, who are wholly Depress'd, and sink themselves into Earth and Sense? And if *Christ* be *Ascended* and set at *God's Right Hand* in Heaven; How can they be said to be his Followers, who are still wandering and bewildring themselves at the furthest distance from him on Earth where he is not, and will not so much as lift up an Eye after him into Heaven where he is? So that such Men must own, either that *Humanity* hath no relation to Heaven, and that *Christ* is not there, but still on Earth in the same manner as ever he was; Or that they have no Relation to *Humanity*, and follow not, but forsake *Christ*. For to live an Hu-
mane

mane and Christian Life now, is to live on Earth, like one that belongs also to Heaven; An Amphibious Creature designed for both States; and therefore not so wholly addicted to one, as to become wholly incapacitated for the other; which is to degenerate and debase our Nature and Profession; as certainly nothing does more, than Men's groveling here below, who are designed for, and called hereby to *Things that are above.*

Let who will then *build Tabernacles* for themselves, regarding no other *Good* beyond the present Abode *here.* Let the World be as kind to Indulge as it commonly is extravagant to Promise Happiness. Let its *Goods* for *many Years* crowd *full our Barns* and capacious Store-Houses. Yet since *Christ* is *Ascended* to the *Right Hand of God* in Heaven, to take Possession, and make us an Interest there too; What *Ease* and Content can any or all the Enjoyments of the Earth yield to a Soul enamour'd with, inspired by, depending on, and United to him, in this its *Absence from the Lord?* To the *Children of this World* therefore, is intirely in Affection hence resigned by the *Children of the Resurrection* (who Profess to be *Risen with Christ*) the unenvy'd Possession of all Sublunary Abundance; Whose Desires are larger, and Hopes higher, while they firmly Believe and actually Eye him *Ascended up into Heaven, and sitting at the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty.*

Of which Doctrine, the Import, and Certainty, and Design and Influence, as Profess'd by us in the Creed, amounts to this, *viz. That we are Assured upon the most unexceptionable Evidence; that after Forty Days stay upon Earth from his Resurrection, Jesus Christ in his Humanity inseparable from his Divinity, Ascended from this Earth, by a Proper Local Motion*
into

into Heaven ; where he Abides in the full Possession of the highest Power, Dignity and Dominion, as was foretold by ancient Types and Prophecies ; having sent down thence the Holy Ghost ; and prepared Places there for all his true Followers ; for whom he Mediates as Prophet, Priest and King, to the Confirmation of Faith, and increase of Joy, and Comfort of Hope, and engagement and direction of Obedience, and raising of Affections from things beneath to things that are above. To which effects and in which sense, we profess to Believe that Jesus Christ Ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty.

To which Blessed State may we all follow him, through the Power of the Merits and Mediation of the same our Redeemer, by the Mercy of God, and Conduct of the Blessed Spirit ; To whom be Glory, now and for ever ! *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON XV.
ON THE
Seventh Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

2 Cor. v. 10.

For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be Good or Bad.

THese Words contain a very Plain and Ample Account of a Final Judgment, as asserted in the seventh Article of our Creed, and is the last Instance, and Completion of the Exaltation of the Grand Object of our Faith, Jesus Christ the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour.

Concerning this Affecting Subject, they instruct us in the seven following Particulars, express'd or implied in them.

I. The

I. The Certainty of a Future Judgment. In as much as *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.*

II. The Time of such Appearance, intimated in the Design of it, express'd to be, to receive the Things done in the Body; hereby determining it to commence after Death, which is a Separation from the Body, and Conclusion of all the accountable Actions done therein.

III. The Person of our Judge, to whom this great Power and Honour is committed; which we are to believe is no other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who not only sitteth on the Right hand of God, (where, in our last, we left him) but from thence he shall come to Judge the Quick and the Dead; before whose Judgment Seat we must all appear.

IV. The Prisoners here Summon'd to be Tryed; Even All and Every One. For we must [All] appear, That [Every One] may receive.

V. The Cause to be then tryed, or the Matter coming under the Cognisance of this Judgment. And that is the Things done in the Body, Whether it be Good or Bad.

VI. The Sentence Pronounced and Executed, Finally, hereupon, which all appear to Receive. And,

VII. Lastly, The Righteousness thereof, which will be according to that he hath done.

The certainty of a future Judgment.

I. Here is a plain Intimation of the Certainty of a Future Judgment; In as much as we must all appear before the Judgment Seat (which is a Judicial Appearance) and we believe that Christ will one Day come to Judge the Quick and the Dead. The

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Necessity whereof, is the most Natural and Easy Thing in the World to Apprehend. 1. *From the Consideration of Man*; who, both in his Nature and Condition, appears to be an Accountable Creature; as he is capable to know and judge of what he doth; Having a Rule given him to Act by, to direct him what to do; And Freedom to determine his Choice by Hopes and Fears to do as he is Commanded, as he is Inferiour and Accountable to God who is his Sovereign Lord. 2. *From the Consideration of the Essential Difference between Good and Evil*, demonstrable to every Man's Sense and Experience; Rewards and Punishments, being naturally expected and depended on from God by all that own him to be the Sovereign Lord of the World, and alone of sufficient Power and Authority to Judge, Infinitely Wise to examine, Holy to Distinguish, Good to Consider, and Just to Recompence Humane Actions. And further, 3. *From the Consideration of the Expediency of an Exact Discrimination* to distinguish and discover Persons; who impose so easily upon one anothers Opinions, thro Hypocrisy, Indiscretion, Malice or Modesty, Insomuch that no Man is throughly to be known, till manifested by that final Division, *Mat. 25.* that will eternally *separate* between the good and *32.* the Bad. Besides, 4. *A necessary Vindication of God's Justice*; which seems in this World not only Intricate, but very oft mistaken in misplacing Rewards and Punishments, contrary to Mens acknowledg'd Deserts. As also, 5. *The Natural Presages of Conscience*, Expecting to be Rewarded or Punished hereafter, for the Good or Evil done now; which no Endeavours can prevent, no Art or Resolution totally destroy; An Invisibile Justice over-awing them, whom no Humane Power

Power can touch; especially in times of Distress, and under a present Sense of Death; when Men begin, and think it time, to be Serious and Wise in earnest, and are not apt to be fond of Flattery. But above all, 6. *The irrefragable Confirmation given hereto by Divine Revelation*; that hath given the most undoubted Assurances of the Certainty of a *Future Judgment*, and made it the Foundation of the whole Christian Religion; which would be both a very Unintelligible and a despised Institution without it; And *Christians*, with *Hope in this Life only*, would surely, of all Men, be the most Silly as well as Miserable. And therefore, Lastly, 7. *Even the Support of Religion* necessitates the Truth hereof. To excite to Obedience, and restrain from Offending; to justify the Divine Attributes, and to convince of the Reasonableness and Necessity of the Gospel Precepts, it is frequently inculcated and plainly taught, by Positive Assertion, by certain Prophecy, by Gracious Promise, by Peremptory Threat, and by Parabolical Resemblances in holy Scripture, That as it is appointed for Men once to die, so that, after that, there is a Judgment. A Judgment as Certain and Unavoidable as Death; As much to be depended on, and Necessary to be Thought on and Prepared for; as being not more Obscure for its Distance from us, than Real and Certain for the clear Discoveries made thereof to us. The Throne hath been already seen; The Judge represented sitting thereon; The Books opened, and the Dead both small and great standing at the Tribunal; that all may take timely warning hereof; Good Men may Hope for, Bad Men Fear and be awed hereby; and All Men be alarm'd what to Expect, so as to influence their Lives thereby; to keep their

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Heb. 9.27.

Accompts carefully, and even with God; to Sue out their Pardon beforehand; to have it in a readiness against that approaching Day; and to improve their Talents proportionably to their present Trusts. Especially, since it seems to be *Near* as well as *Certain*; Considering,

II. *The Time when this Judgment may be expected*; intimated in the Text, to us, by its Design, express'd to be to receive the Things done in the Body; thereby determining it to commence after Death, which is a Separation from the Body and Conclusion of all the Accountable Actions done therein. And whence therefore may be collected that the Time of Judgment will be Twofold; either Immediately as soon as ever we shall have done Acting in the Body, and before it be reassumed by us; Or Mediatly at the General Resurrection of the Dead, when we shall again Appear in these very *Bodies* wherein we are now doing those *Things* then to be finally accounted for by us; Both which *Times* are after Death;

The First referring to what is called the *Particular Judgment*, The Latter to the *General Judgment*.

The *Particular Day of Judgment*, is what immediately succeeds every Particular Man's Death; Accounting singly and in a more Private Process with him, that he may receive, in his Intermediate State of Separation, *the Things done in his Body*. Which tho not the *Judgment* meant in either our *Creed* or *Text*, yet may nevertheless be Certain; and hath generally been believed by Heathens as well as Christians; and is evidently both well Grounded and well Intended; Offering both Reason and Advantage for its Admittance.

For

For what ever Contest some would engage in about the Propriety of it's *Name*, yet all Consent as to the *Thing*; That when any Man dies, he is immediately sentenced to a different State of Happiness or Misery, *according to that he hath done*, in the Body, *whether it be Good or Bad*; and which is a kind of *Judgment*, tho without the more Pompous Solemnities appropriated to the General and Publick Judgment, whereto this is only Introductory, and as much supposed thereby, as the Apprehension and Confinement of a Criminal necessarily precedes his Arraignment and final Execution; and seems reasonable for the Awarding the Soul its intermediate State, for which tho not a *Final*, yet a *Present Sentence* may be immediately at Death pronounced; and whereby *Lazarus*, when he died, was placed in *Abraham's Bosom*, and *Dives* in his own proper Degree of *Torments*, and for which every Man's *Spirit*, when the *Dust shall return to the Earth as it was*, shall also return *unto God who gave it*; even to receive from him its different Doom, to be Entertain'd or Banish'd thence forward.

Eccl. 12.7.

The Consequence of such a Belief is of singular Use, to Exclude those two Romish Errors of a *Purgatory* and *Praying for the Dead*, as leaving no room for the supposal of either, through the Immediateness of a judicial Sentence at Death, that unalterably fixeth the Souls Intermediate Doom till the Resurrection. It moreover Convinces us what it is maketh Death so Momentous and Terrible a Concern, especially to the Guilty. It admonishes of the great Stress and Interest depending intirely upon the narrow Space of this uncertain Life. It Warnes of the Nearness of *Judgment*, and a Day of Reckoning to every one of us, to which

Death

Death consigns immediately over. It Exciteth more Powerfully to Circumspection of our Actions; and supporteth to undergo more Chearfully the Injuries and Sufferings of a present Conflict to preserve Innocency, so shortly to be vindicated and Rewarded by this *Particular Judgment*, so much short of the Last which Consummates this.

A General Judgment, at the Resurrection of all Flesh, is what the *Scripture* particularly and amply insists on, (This being only Express'd, where the other may be also intended.) And therefore hath it been thought sufficient to insert this alone in our *Creed*; to which our *Text* refers. For which we are assured a set *Day is Appointed*, that is Certain, and Approaching daily, and will come at last in its due time, and too soon for such as set least by the Notices given them of it. Which will not be delayed one Moment longer than its appointed time which nothing can divert or escape, being designed to be Publick, General, and therefore Terrible. Whereat all *must appear*, at the End of the World and Resurrection of the Dead; when Christ shall consummate his Trust as *Mediator* in the last Act of his Office, in order to surrender up his Power, and deliver the Kingdom to God the Father, and introduce a New and Unalterable State of Eternal Joys, or Miseries, to succeed this present time of Tryal and Grace then ended and over for ever. Of which *Day and Hour* tho no Man knoweth, no nor the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father; Yet have all fair warning given them to Assure themselves that it will be, and to live in Expectation thereof, as being now nearer than ever, and the time necessarily hastning on, after so long an Expectation of it; and being like to be Sudden, Surprising

The General Judgment.

Act. 17. 31

1 Cor. 13
24.

and Terrible, whenever it does come. And therefore to it, as we ought continually to direct our Eye, so contentedly with Patience to refer all Judgment and Difficulties for Decision. Affecting our Souls with a strong and constant Sense thereof. Familiarizing our Thoughts thereto. And Governing our Lives thereby, so as to secure our own Interest in the Process thereof, *laying up to our selves a Good Foundation for Hope*, both in the Day of *Death and Judgment*. And to Affect our selves further herewith, (being sure of the Thing, and when to expect it) Consider we also, what the *Text* expressly mentions concerning it,

*Christ to
be the
Judge.*

III. *The Person of our Judge, to whom this Great Power and Honour is committed, Which is Christ, before whose Judgment Seat it is that we must all Appear; and whom it is we profess to believe will come to judge the Quick and the Dead; The Certainty, and Expediency, and Manner of whose Appearance in this Capacity being distinctly reflected on, will sufficiently illustrate this Particular to us.*

1. *The Certainty of the Person of our Judge, is very particularly determin'd to that of our Redeemer; whom God (to whom the Original Judiciary Power is appropriated) hath delegated by Commission to this Part of his Regal Office compleating his Exaltation. Which was fore-shewn by the Prophets in the Old Testament; who as they by his Humility and Grief foretold his coming to Suffer, so by his Power and Glory represented him as a Judge. Whence the Jews have run themselves into that fanciful Mistake of looking for a Double Messias (one the Son of Joseph, the other of David; one of the Tribe of Ephraim,*

im, the other of *Judah*; One to Suffer, and the other to Judge) and which is not otherwise to be evaded, but by an Assurance of one and the same Persons twice coming; as first to Suffer and Die, so returning again to Judge and Govern. Which *Isaiah* meant, speaking of the Government laid upon the Shoulders of that Son he foretold should be Born and given unto us, and of a Kingdom assign'd to him to be ordered and established with Judgment and Justice for ever; Foretelling his bringing forth Judgment to the Gentiles, and unto Truth; And Executing the same with Righteousness. Which *Enoch*, in his Prophecy preserved by *St. Jude*, behold the Lord coming to, with Ten Thousand of his Angels; And *Daniel* yet more particularly had represented to him in the Night Visions, one like the Son of Man, invested with the Dominion and Glory, and Kingdom, of the Ancient of Days, to which all People, Nations, and Languages should be subject, never to pass away, or be destroy'd. According to which Predictions in the Old, the New Testament expressly teaches, that the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son, who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the Quick and the Dead; whereof he hath given assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead. Hereby the Testimony Christ gave of himself is irresistibly confirmed, and he visibly advanced to his Kingdom, in which he must Reign till he hath put down all Enemies under his Feet, which is the Exercise of a Judiciary Power, and whereof he hath already given sensible Presages and Preludiums in those effects of his Resurrection, whereby the Jewish Nation and the Devils Kingdom have been overthrow'n. And this also we have frequently intimated to us by several Figurative and Parabolical Descriptions,

II. 9. 6, 7.

--- 42. 1, 3;
--- 11. 4.

Jude 14.

Dan. 7.

13, 14.

Jo. 5. 22.

Aa. 10. 42.

--- 17. 31.

Mat. 3. 12. ons, Representing *Christ* as an *Husbandman*, separating the *Wheat* sometime from the *Chaff*, and
 —13. 30. sometime from the *Tares*: As a *Fisher-Man*, gathering
 —48. the Good, and casting away the Bad Fish: As
 —25. 10. a *Bridegroom*, entertaining the Wife, and excluding
 —14. the Foolish Virgins: As an *Houſholder*, distinguishing his Domestick Servants by Rewarding the Faithful, and Punishing the Unprofitable: And Lastly, As a *Shepherd* dividing his Sheep from the Goats, to his Right and Left Hand. All which, describing the Person of our Lord, represent his Judiciary Authority, and contribute to Assure us that it is he that will come to Judge the Quick and the Dead.

2. The Expediency whereof (tho it may be resolved by the Unaccountable and Infalible Determination of the Divine Decree, Yet) is easily conceivable and plainly intimated upon very strong and obvious reason. This being requisite.

1. Because *Christ* is our Saviour, to save his People from their Sins; which he cannot be said to have perfectly done till he hath finally acquitted and absolved them at the Day of Judgment, in a judicial Deliverance from the Wrath of God, threatned against Sin, and by an Actual Sentence conferring Life and Glory. So that whatever other Benefits we receive by his Ministry and Death, our Salvation is not finish'd, but by his Power and Authority to judge us; who therefore is alone appointed to Judge, as he alone is the Saviour of the World. And

2. This also was but a fitting Reward of his Humiliation and Sufferings, whereby the Excellency of his Person will be made visible to all the World, which while he was on Earth was clouded, and now he is in Heaven, is removed from the Sight and Admiration

ration of its Inhabitants; And the shame of the Cross be done away by and changed into the Glory and Triumph of a Tribunal. And in the mean time, our Notice and Assurance hereof,

3. *Gives great Authority to his Laws, and Credit to his Promises and Threats.* As being the only Rule by which we shall be judged, and the certain Word that wants neither Power nor Authority to be made good upon us; and from which nothing can detain or rescue, being pronounced by our Judge, who is also our Saviour. Indeed,

4. *The execution of this is a considerable part of his Regal Office, to which Jesus was anointed as the Christ; To whom, as such, the administration of Justice belongs originally; and which, being of too great Eminence and Dignity to be delegated to any other, it belongs to him alone to execute it himself; and who, therefore, as the Apostle speaks, shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his Appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 1. and his Kingdom.* Especially since,

5. *He alone is Capacitated for such a Judicature: being qualify'd both for its Discharge and Honour; Having a Supreme Authority which none can question or Appeal from; An Infinite Understanding to search and distinguish; An incorruptible Integrity which no Interest or Affection can byass; An Almighty Power to Reward and Punish; Besides that he hath had a sufficient Commerce with Flesh and Blood, and is Acquainted with all its Infirmities; who knows of what Frame we are made, having felt all that we feel, and conflicted with the same Temptations, and therefore knows how to do us Justice (which the highest Angel in Heaven is not capable of) in our Case, and to represent the greatest Mildness and Sweetness of*

Mercy in the Severity of that just and Irrespective Judgment. Besides whom there is no other fit to sit as Judge of Princes and Potentates, of Men and Angels, except he who Made and Governs them, who is over all in Power, and next in Dignity to the Father, even the Son of God himself, to whom therefore all Judgment is committed. And,

6. *Herein God hath given us a Signal Demonstration of his Goodness and tender Regard for our Welfare;* In referring the final Decision of our Cause to the Cognizance of one that is the best and truest Friend to us; that is no way disaffected nor indifferently Affected towards us, but wishes us well, and hath express'd an excess of Kindness in doing well for us; and had it been left to us, Self-Interest would have made him our own Choice to be our Judge; whereby the Terror of the Solemnity is mercifully temper'd and allay'd, our Expectation made easy and our Preparation encouraged in regard thereto. And, Finally, hereby alone,

7. *It is provided that the Last Judgment may be executed by a Visible Judge;* that it may not be thought the Effect of Chance or Fate, but that the World may know for what they are Judged, and see the Hand that executes their Doom upon them, and be convinc'd of the Power and Justice, and Goodness of God, in the Final Damnation of Sinners, and Salvation of the Virtuous. For which the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity having a kind of Natural Capacity which the others had not, (because of all the Three Persons which are God, the Son only by Assuming our Nature became Visible) therefore (as St. John expresses it) *The Father hath given him Authority to execute, Judgment, because he is the Son*

f Man; and therefore a Proper Judge of Mankind being a visible God, that can make a visible Appearance, in a Visible Glory, which otherwise would not have been either Discernable or Supportable to us.

3. *The Manner of whose Appearance in this Capacity* (tho our Creed mentions only that *Thence he will come*, whither he *Ascended* and is now *sate at the Right Hand of God*, and our Text mentions nothing at all thereof, yet) is represented to us, in other Places of Scripture, in a very Pompous and Terrible Solemnity. Our Saviour himself tells us, *That the Son of Man shall come in his own Glory*, (even that of an Incarnate God, which his Humanity being Glorified will no longer hide from shining out to Discover and Distinguish it self from all other the most Glorified Creatures) and *in the Glory of his Father*, descend with him from the *Right Hand of God*, wherein he is now *sate* with the Authority and Majesty of an Universal Judge, with all the *Holy Angels*, Myriads of Bright and Glorious Beings to adorn his Triumph, and to be Witnesses and Ministers of his Justice. *That* ¹ *Thef. 4.* *he will Descend with a Shout*, even the loud Acclamations of the Pompous Train, with the *Voice of the Arch-Angel*, beginning the Alarms and Resounding before the Judge an Universal Summons, with the *Trump of Christ*, at the Sound whereof (in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye) the scatter'd Dust of *Adam's Seed* will be rous'd and rally'd out of its Mortal Slumber. That the *Dead in Christ* shall arise first: and then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds to attend and meet this Glorious Procession of the Lord in the Air. And whom then we shall All first see with our Corporeal Eyes, not

The manner of his Appearance.

Lu. 9. 26.

16.

Zach. 12.
10.
Rev. 1. 7.

as he was look'd on and despis'd in his State of Humiliation here on Earth (first an helpless Infant in a Manger, and at last a Condemn'd Malefactor hanging in a shameful Manner upon a Cross) But as he is *Exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour*, in all his Majesty and Glory, enthron'd triumphantly on the *Clouds*, with the *Dead both small and great standing before him*, and the *Books* opened wherein all the Particular Actions of every Man's Life, hath been faithfully recorded, and will now be compared with, and judged by those Laws given for a Rule thereof; on whom *every Eye* will be fixt, and know and own this Great Judge to be the very same *Jesus* whom the *Jews Pierced*, and every Wicked Man hath derided, and Good Men longed for. And what a Terror to the Guilty! What a Transport of Joy to the Righteous! And what an Amazing Surprise to all will this necessarily be accompanied with!

For with what Heart will the *Wicked Men* be able to look him in the Face as their Judge, whom they would not have for their *Saviour*! When such shall be, to their Everlasting Sorrow, too late, convinced that the derided *Fable of a Crucified Jesus*, and a *Future Judgment* by him, prove the most Sad and Certain Truth. How will such Bewail and Curse their Infidelity? How will they account for their Actions, who never expected to be call'd to an Account for them? How will they bear his Presence; or whither shall they fly from him, whose abused Kindness is kindled into flaming Vengeance against them, in this *Day of his Wrath*, which not the boldest unshaken Sinner will be able to abide!

But, Oh, The Blessed Time for the *Pardon'd Penitents*! When they shall see none other for
their

their Judge but their loving *Saviour*, whom their Soul loveth and they have longed to see, and whom they loved tho they have not before seen him? With what triumphant Joy will such erect their Heads at the sight of their Approaching Redemption! When they shall view the Glories ready to invest them, after the *likeness* of Christ's *Glorious Body*, And hear themselves call'd forth, and own'd, and singled out of the Crowd, to receive a Crown and Kingdom, and *be for ever with the Lord*, after so long an Absence, and long-ed for Enjoyment!

And Lord, the *Amazing Surprise*, at so sudden and strange Discoveries, that will hence strike upon the Admiration of *All*! To see what we never saw, nor can imagin the Pomp and Glory of! And to be so momentously concern'd in every thing we shall see! Of all the Sights that have raised Wonder, none coming near the *Glorious Appearance* of the Son of God coming to Judgment.

Whom thus, in our Contemplations, having now brought down from Heaven, and seen his Pomp and Preparation for this Affecting Solemnity, we are next to Consider, what our *Text* and *Creed* express, and is allotted to our following Particular.

IV. *The Prisoners Summon'd to be Tryed by him: The Prisoners Even All and Every One: For we must [All] appear.—That [Everyone] may receive; And it is both the Quick and the Dead* Christ comes to Judge. The full import whereof will oblige us to Consider them as to their *Person*, their *Number*, the *Manner* and *Means* of their *Summons* and *Assembly* together, and their *Order of Appearance* here before this great Judge of the World. 1. *The*

1. The Persons of the Prisoners to be Judged, are express'd in the Text to be *We* our selves who must all appear for that end ; Meaning not only the *Apostle* himself who says so, with those of that Age wherein he lived ; But as well all before as after it. The Word respecting the Whole Race of Mankind, spoke tho only by *One*, yet in the Name of *All* and *Every One* of the Rest. Which our Creed (in the Scriptures own Language elsewhere) expresseth by mentioning the *Quick* and the *Dead*, thereby comprehending all Mankind, both those (for such there shall be) who shall be found alive at the Day of Judgment, and also those who have Dyed, and shall Dye, in all Ages of the World to that Day. Who, in their own Proper Persons, shall then *Appear*, and be made visibly manifest, so as to come under Observation, and be exposed to a Particular Sentence. The Grave shall no longer be able to hide any one of us, nor the Invisible Part of us any longer be confin'd to a State of Separation ; But we must *All* and *Every one* for our selves, and in our own Person (after never so many Ages of Obscurity in a State of Oblivion) Make our *Appearance*, and be brought to light again, and be Discovered not only *that we are*, but *what we are*. *We*, in our own Bodies, shall then be exposed in our own Colours, whosoever we now are. And tho now we hope not to escape Death, but expect to be withdrawn thereby quite out of Sight and Knowledge, so as to be neither *seen* nor heard of *more* in the *Place that Knows us now* so well ; Yet we are assured, that we shall neither be Destroy'd by it, nor always Detain'd in our Graves, but *must* again *Appear*, and be restored to a Visible State and Nature, so as to be seen and known by our own

1 Thess. 4.

15.

Rev. 20.

12.

own Proper Persons again; No longer to remain Undiscover'd. No Privacy shall be able to hide or secure us from coming forth into Publick. No Retirement or Absence will be possible from this General Assembly; Nor can there be Hopes of being lost or forgot, and miss'd in the Crowd. Every Man's turn to be singled out unavoidably coming upon him; that will shew him openly, unmask'd, in the Face, and to Censure of the whole Assembly, whosoever he be; and just such as he shall then be found to have merited. This affords us a Profitable Monition; as to expect and depend upon it, every Man for himself, to be *One* of *All* the Prisoners at the Bar of Christ's Tribunal; so to endeavour to be really such now, as we would be willing all the World should perceive us to be then. For, as no Man can be Excused from, so can none be Undiscover'd in this Judgment: All being alike accountable, and All equally bound over to the last General Assize: Of what Condition or Quality, what Nation or Time, what Sex or Age soever; High and Low, Rich and Poor, Wise and Simple, Learned and Ignorant, Good and Bad; Most Universally *All* and *Every one*, without any Distinction, any Privilege, any exception of Persons; *All* that ever have lived must be Judged.

2. *The Number therefore of such Prisoners* must needs be inconceivably Vast; When not *One* shall be wanting of *All*; And *all must appear* at Once together. For if the *Children* but of one Stock were so many Hundred Years ago, counted *as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude*; what shall we count them now, who have been multiplying ever since, and when they shall be added to all that went before, and numbred with Multitudes
of

of other Descendants? The Rendezvous of any One Generation of Men, that might Collect and Shew them altogether, would make a vast Appearance; such as Mortal Eye never saw, nor could be Able to behold without a Terrible Amazement. And yet a *single Generation* is but an Inconsiderable Part of all that ever have been already, or may be hereafter in this World, Assembled together before Christ's Tribunal. Whereto when we have added the Myriads of Glorious *Angels* attending our Judge as Witnesses and Ministers of the Assize, and the *Devil* with all his Cursed Accomplices, summon'd to be Judged and condemned with the Subjects of his own Kingdom, gaine'd by his Temptations (whereby his Apostacy and Condemnation will be aggravated, and then also be accounted for) the Number will still be greater. And *We*, tho unavoidably *One*, yet being but *One* among so Many, Lord what shall we say to such a Multitude, or what shall we think of our selves amidst it! How different are the Sentiments of a Man's own self, when Alone or with but Few, and in a Publick Appearance? It is Naturally affecting to look upon a Crowd; But much more so to be look'd upon thereby. Good Lord! How then shall one single Face shew it self, and look upon so amazing a Concourse in such an Open Court, and in the most Solemn and Publick Manner? To be singl'd out and expos'd in the View of all the World to plead our depending Cause before an Audience and Judge, too Judicious to be imposed upon, and in too Publick a Place to pass Unobserved; when the Eyes and Ears of all will be turned and fastened upon us, that never saw or heard of us before, and we be made the only Object of their Scorn
or

or Applause, as upon Tryal we shall be then Sentenc'd to Deserve ! When the whole World shall Censure our Doom, and Ring out upon us their Plaudits or Hisses ! Where every Condemn'd Criminal shall have in his Eye, on the One Hand the Envy'd Company of the Glorify'd Saints, ashamed of his discovered Vileness, and Applauding the Justness of his Condemnation ; And, on the other Hand, the Hated Rout of his Lewd Associates and *Brethren in Iniquity*, to his Shame and Grief, thronging about him, and persecuting him with their enraged Exclamations to Witness against him, as the Occasion of their, as well as his own Ruine ; Aggravating thereby his Crimes, and calling for Vengeance and Justice on the surpris'd trembling Caitiff ! What a Terror and Concern to be so Publickly Expos'd ! And yet are *We*, and *Every One* of us, to make one of the Number, to *Appear* among All ! And had need therefore, in time, to be arming our selves against the Surprise ; by securing the Righteousness of our Cause, and Ingratiating our Selves into the Favour of our Judge, that such our *Appearance* may tend to the Publishing not of our Disgrace but Glory, in the loud Congratulations of our Triumphant Acquittance and Reception, in the open Presence of the whole, as well Angelical as Humane Creation.

3. *The Manner and Means of Summoning this vast Concourse thus together*, can be neither Ordinary nor Natural, inasmuch as those who are *Dead* cannot make their Appearance without some *Special Assistance*, and those who are the *Guilty* will be no less Indisposed for the same without *Compulsion*. Therefore is there a *Necessity* impos'd ; which makes it a *forc'd Case*, to which if any will not

not yield, he shall be *compell'd*, For we [must] all *Appear*, and both Receive and fulfill our Summons. The Noise of a Shout, The Voice of an Arch-Angel, The blast of the Trump, and the effectual Ministry of the Angels will Rouse the Dead and Force the Refractory. So that as the Deepest Sleep of those will be dissolv'd, and every drowsy Atome of Corrupted Flesh be awak'd and rally'd into its own Body capable to readmit its long Departed Soul; so shall the most subtle Craft and Powerful Obstinacy of these, be forc'd hereby to Yield, to quit their Lurking Obscurity, and come forth to Judgment. And therefore as *Compulsion* aggravates Terror; so does it hence concern every one of us to prepare and Dispose our Selves, not to need any thing more than Capacity, Chearfully to comply with what will be impossible to avoid; That we may be able not only *not to Fear*, but *Long for*, and *Welcome* the Summons that will finally bring us to the Bar, only to receive our Discharge and Reward, in the most Advantagious Manner.

4. And to this, the Order of the Prisoners Appearance, does not a little seem to Contribute. Of which, tho the Scriptures are not very Particular in Describing, Yet are they very Clear in intimating, That the Righteous shall First, in order of Time, be Judg'd, Absolv'd and Advanced from the Bar to attend on the Seat of Judgment, before the Wicked shall so much as come before it to take their Tryal. For, not only in those Parables, relating to this Matter, of the *Net cast into the Sea*, may we observe the *Good Fish* to be first gathered into Vessels before the *Bad* were thrown away; And, of the *Sheep and Goats*, the *Blessed of the Father* to be first Acquitted, before the *Cursed* were Doomed; But

Mat. 13.

48.

Mat. 25.

34.

1 Thes. 4.

16.

But from the *Apostle's* Assuring us that *the Dead in Christ shall rise first*; and that *the Saints shall Judge the World* (as no doubt, they will do, by Reproaching their Impieties, and Approving the Righteousness of their Condemnation) it appears Unquestionable, that Good Men will be first called forth and pronounced Blessed. And this, as it suits well the Person of our Judge, who is also a Saviour, and whom therefore it becomes to prefer Mercy and Salvation before Justice and Vengeance; so also, it will add as to the Joy of the Righteous, to prevent their Suspence, and hasten the Completion of the Reward; so to the Terror and Anguish of the Wicked, to convince them of their Loss, upbraid them as being the only Occasion of it themselves, and to double their Damnation, first by Expectation, and then by sense of their Doom. But, to illustrate this, the Consideration of our next Particular succeeds now seasonably, and is

V. *The Cause to be then Tryed*, Or the Matter ^{*The Cause they are to be tryed for.*} coming under the Cognizance of this Judgment; Which is suppos'd only in the Creed, but very particularly express'd in the Text, to be *the Things done in the Body*, — *Whether it be Good or Bad*: And, of this, the Import or Extent of its meaning and Report, or Means of Information, deserves to be distinctly Consider'd and Improv'd by us.

I. *The Import*, cannot imply less than these two Things; That as *only* what we do now before we Depart out of this Body in the Present Life; so *All and Every* such Action shall be accounted for in this Judgment. For *the Things done in the Body*, are the *only Things* God hath determin'd to try us by; and therefore the Law and Revelation of his Will dispens'd to us, concerns

cerns it self no farther than as a Rule of this Life, without any regard of what he will have done by us upon our Entrance into the other Life; which is but the Consequence of this; to be to us just what this makes it. And therefore, tho our next Life is our Greatest Concern; and it behoves us to be solicitous above all Things to know what will become of us, when we must turn out hence; yet can we be no otherwise concern'd for, nor assured of doing well in the next, than by living this Life well; which is the only Condition whereon the Felicity of another Life is possible to be had; and is all our present Concern in order to our Future Everlasting Happiness depending hereupon. And therefore, 'tis to no Purpose to think of Mending, or Doing well hereafter, when rid of this Corrupt *Body*; because there will be no *Judgment* to Reward such *Actions*: And all the Relentings or Convictions labour'd under then, when the State of Things will appear to us under other Apprehensions, tho our Crys for Mercy be never so Earnest, and our Compunctions for our Sins be never so sincere and intense (such as now might effectually obtain our Pardon) yet being too late, and not done *in the Body*, will then avail nothing, nor ever be mention'd in our Favour at this Bar. Which surely, is a very affecting Reflection; when we remember *how short our Time* is here; who are, in a Manner, but just come to know where we are, and yet are posting away again; and even yet before we are gone shall have lost or gain'd an Everlasting Crown and Felicity! Good Lord, On what a small Thing, does so vast a Weight hang! An Immense Eternity in the Womb of an Inch of Time! So vast a Stake to be Won or Lost, by so few

few throws! And how should this engage our Vigilance, and excite our Endeavours to do our Best for fear of the Worst! Especially since as our Life is [*Only*] so it is [*wholly*] upon Account; and tho only *the Things done in the Body*, yet all such, without Exception, will be called in- to Judgment. So that the Actions already *done by us*, being all exactly register'd and faithfully Fil- ed up, will be to be Examined and Sentenc'd at this Great and Solemn Day of Assize. Be the Transactions of our Lives *Good or Bad*, yet because they are *Things done in the Body*, this Judgment must pass upon them; whether thereby we un- derstand such Operations as are perform'd by the Ministry of the grosser Members of our Bodies; Or those which are the immediate Operations of our Minds, or such finally as require only the Mid- wifery of our Tongues; even our *Thoughts, Words, and Actions*, whether *Good or Bad*; as they all come under the Direction of the Divine Laws, so are they equally the Subjects of the Final Judicial Exe- cutions. Our very *Thoughts* come under this Cog- nizance of the Divine Tribunal; being as open to God as our Actions, or no less pleasing or offen- sive to him, as we thereby no less resemble or dissent from the Purity and Holiness of him who *is a Spirit*, in our Wills and Spirits. And this, as it encourages inward and invisible Sanctity, in Pi- ous Contemplations and Divine Aspirations of the Heart after God, (being all regarded by our *Hea- venly Father who seeth in Secret*, and will Reward all that is Good, even to a Thought, in *us openly*) so ought it to prevent and drive out all sinful Pas- sions of *Lust and Anger*, and *Malice*, and *Pride*, and *Envy*, that defile the Soul, and will expose the Sinner, when the Lord shall come; who both will

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bring

bring to light the hidden Things of Darknes, and will make manifest the Counsels of the Heart : and then
 1 Cor. 4. 5. shall every Man, says the Apostle, have Praise of God. And if our *Thoughts* then much more will Our Words be judged, which are the first and most natural Indications of their Temper and Strength
 Mat. 12. 34. (Out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaking ; betraying what is within, and what is there prevalent.) Nothing being apparently the Cause of greater Good or Mischief in the World, than as Men Talk and Converse with one another hereby. And therefore are we assured, That every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned. So that Words do not vanish with the Air they are form'd of ; But remain Records to plead for or against us. Which, as it is a great Encouragement to promote *Religious*, so should it be a Powerful Restraint to suppress all *Impious and Prophane Discourse* in common Conversation. Since not one Pious Advice, or seasonable Reproof, or necessary Instruction, that we have Urg'd in vain to reform Sinners ; Or Deyout Expression they have Ridicul'd us for ; tho wholly lost to them, can be lost to our selves, or fail abundantly to recompence any present Discouragement for them. And since, on the other hand, All Impious and Prophane Expressions, Unclean and Wanton Discourses, Passionate and Bitter Revilings, Malicious Slanders, Whisperings and Backbiteings, Dissembled Flatteries, Pernicious Counsels, and Forg'd Excuses, that have been the Employment and Entertainment of Sinners, will become their Shame and Condemnation. And much more then will our *Actions* of all Kinds be thoroughly Dis-

closed

closed and Discussed in this Judgment; For God ^{Eccl. 11.}
will bring every Work into Judgment: with every se- ^{14.}
cret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be
Evil. The Evil Actions of Good Men, tho blot-
 ted out and pardon'd, so as not to be expos'd to
 Shame or Confusion, will not yet be so forgot as
 to obscure and lessen that Clemency, Justice, and
 Grace by which they are Discharged. And *the Best*
Actions of Bad Men (that may have the Appear-
 ance, tho not the Nature, of Goodness; and
 may have fewer Degrees of Badness in them, and
 be some Extenuation of Guilt) will not be reject-
 ed, from being made a Plea, so far as they de-
 serve, for the Advantage of Sinners; both for
 the clearer Vindication of the Righteousness of
 God's Judgment, and Undeceiving the Hopes of
 every Criminal, who shall not be Condemn'd till
 every Thing hath been alledg'd in his Favour to
 save him. *Secret as well as open Actions,* (since all ^{Mat. 7.21.}
 are alike open to God) will be here Discover'd.
 And *Obscured Virtue* that was practic'd only for
 Gods' sake, and had neither the Notice nor Ap-
 plause of Men, will not always lie either hid or
 unrewarded. And the *hidden Works of Darknes,* ^{1 Cor. 4.1.}
 that fear'd the Knowledge of Men, more than
 the Presence of God, and escaped the Shame and
 Punishment they deserved, will be here expo-
 sed to both, and cease to be either Secret or Se-
 cure. And not only Actions, but even *the Ag-*
gravations and Circumstances of Actions will come
 under Examination; so far as to clear up the
 Merit of every Cause, and proportion the De-
 grees of Rewards and Punishments. Yea, and
 not only *Personal Actions,* but in many Cases, *the*
Actions of other Men, which we have made our
 own, and shall justly share in the Account of

what we have been the Cause. The Innocence and Virtue we have been instrumental to Preserve and Promote will redound to our Advantage; And the Sins we occasion we shall bear the Guilt of; whereby as Wicked Men will have more to Answer and Suffer for than they ever think of; So Good Men may be Rewarded for much more Good done by them, than ever before they knew or heard of. In a Word, Even *the Actions that might have been done*, as well as those we have done, will likewise there be remembered and imputed to us. Improvements being Talents given to account for; and Omissions to be doom'd no less exactly than Commissions; we being as much bound to do what God enjoyns, as to forbear doing what he forbids. So that *Ignorance of Duty*, which no Man can excuse, will not be admitted to Excuse any. And *Infidelity*, that cannot be owing to want of Evidence, will be an effectual Evidence for the Condemnation of every Unbeliever. And the *Doing only no Hurt*, when all may, in one degree or other, do Good, will hurt our Cause and make it Bad enough to Cast such Sinners. To conclude, Let it be also added, *That together with the Actions are to be included their Effects*; which may long survive and be doing Good or Hurt, even after Commission, as much or more than just while they were Committing; Which being only imputable thereto, must in Justice be accounted for therewith; Whereby Men may be Sinning and Serving God, not only whilst they Live, but when they are in their Graves. And therefore as Men know not the utmost they have to answer for by what they now Do, so ought they to be more Cautious what they Do, that only their Reward, and not their Punishment may thereby

thereby be extended beyond their Expectation, as much as the Good of their Deeds shall last beyond their Times. For in this Sense, *the Things done out of the Body*, as well as *in the Body*, being one and the same Action in its Cause and Effect, will be equally *Judged and Received, according to that which is done, whether it be Good or Bad.*

Of so Universal an Extent is the Cognizance of this *Judgment*; neither yet to be doubted of nor wondered at, Considering, briefly,

2. *The Report or Means of Information*, whereby such a Discovery will be made; Even the *Eye Witness of our Judge* himself; who hath seen and regarded all we have done, and been Present with us, when we least thought of or Regarded him, and most confided to Secresy. Nothing hath been ever hid from his Knowledge, nor will ever slip out of his Memory; For he keeps also, it seems, an exact Register (even *the Book of God's Remembrance*) a Record of every Man's Life and Actions, as a standing Witness for or against him. And there is no doubt but that as *Sinners* will sensibly cry out for Justice against one another, so far as they have occasioned the Guilt that is like to be now their Damnation; So will the *Righteous* be ready enough to Acknowledge and Plead (were it needfull or required) the Good Offices they have been Instrumental in to one anothers Reformation that hath secured now their Salvation. However, There are also Good *Angels* that were *sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation*; who so far as they have been concern'd, can attest to the Innocency and faithfulness of the Lives of such. And there will be the *Devils* that are the *Accusers of the Brethren*, who will aggravate every Crime they contributed to lead to, *and*

Mal. 3.16.

Heb. 1.14.

Rev. 12.

10.

Rom. 2.
15. 16.

and call for Revenge on them whom they sought to devour. And were there no other, Men's own Consciences will prove Witness enough to Discover and Attest the Merit of their Doom: Their Conscience also bearing Witness, and the Thoughts the mean while Accusing, or else excusing one another, in the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ. All which as it will cause the Rejoycing of the Righteous, so will it inflict Surprise and Horror on the Wicked; the Pronouncing and Execution whereof, is what we are next to Reflect on, by Considering,

The Sentence.

Mat. 25.
34.

VI. The Sentence consequent and depending on such Tryal, which all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (as the Text expresses it) to receive (i. e.) to Hear Pronounced, and Feel Executed, and to Bear thence, and Remain for ever under the Merit and Sentence of the Things done in the Body; And which, according to that he hath done, is therefore only of two Kinds, Good or Bad. For if the Things done in the Body be found Good, then there will follow the Pronuntiation, and immediately upon that the Execution of the most Blessed and fully Acquitting Sentence of Come ye Blessed of the Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. From which Moment the Felicity of the Righteous will be Compleat; Their Fears over; The Irreversible Decree past on their side; Their Doom determin'd to their Mind; and the deciding Moment securely escaped for all Eternity, being advanced from the Bar to the Tribunal, and Separated to the Right Hand of their Judge to attend his Triumphant and Final Assent to Assign them the Possession of their Glorious Residences in Heaven. But, on the other hand,

hand, if *the Things done in the Body* be found Bad, Dismal Denunciation and Execution of the most Direfull Doom will, too soon, fall upon and be felt, rather than born, by condemned Criminals, Of *Depart from me ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, Prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; Every Word whereof breaths Woe and Misery! For to *Depart*, imports the Infelicity of an Exiled Person, forc'd and drag'd whither he would not go. and whence he covets now to be released. To *Depart from Christ*, is to lose all Hope and the Perfection of Humane Happiness; to which the Righteous being advanced, it will appear lost to the Damned only by their own Fault. To be sent hence with a *Curse* too, represents Wretchedness without Commiseration; which is the height of Misery: Especially being Defecrated to *Fire Everlasting*, that cannot include less than Torment in Extremity and Perpetuity. *Prepar'd* too, in a readiness, and contriv'd by Infinite Wisdom to be made up of the most Sharp and Poinant Miseries, proportion'd and design'd for the First and Boldest Apostates, *the Devil and his Angels*, those Profess'd and Experienced Enemies of Mankind; who will be Company without Comfort, continually insulting over their own Captives, and seeking to Ease and Revenge their own Torments, by Inflicting and Multiplying Torments upon others. And yet so Cutting a Sentence wounds deeper *from the Mouth of Mercy*; which turns our Advocate into our Accuser; and our Saviour, that proffer'd us Redemption, into our Judge to Pronounce Damnation; Leaving none to hear or pity the Cry of them against whom the God of Mercy is inexorable. After all which, if there could be any room for Comfort, it would be only to be

—V. 41.

Doom'd in secret, and to perish Unobserv'd. (As it is some allay to the Infamy of him that dies Ignominiously, to be buried Privately) Which yet the *Publickness and Solemnity of the Transaction* leaves no Expectation for; inflicting the Disgrace and Misery in the most visible and afflicting Manner, in the Presence of God, Angels and Men.

Such is the *Nature of the Sentence* to be Pronounc'd, and Executed upon every one of us, in one of these two Kinds; by which the whole Rational World will be distinguished, and for ever separated before the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. It is now put to our own Choice to fix our Doom. We are already upon our Tryal to Choose Right or Wrong: And have only Life and Death to Choose out of. A little more Time must Determine and Discover which we have Chose. And which soever it be, by that must we be disposed of for ever. If it prove otherwise than Well, we shall have no body to blame but our selves; And prove it never so ill, as it cannot be ever Redress'd, so will it admit of no just Complaint. Which leads us to consider, (as it supposes) therefore,

The Righteousness of it.

VII. Lastly, *The Righteousness of the Sentence here pass'd*; which is said, will be according to that every Man hath done. Which implies, 1. *That our Judge will not proceed Arbitrarily*, either to Save or Damn by Prerogative, but by the Rule of Justice and Equity according to the Laws and Terms of the Gospel; whereby as our Doings ought to be Govern'd, so will they be only Judged. 2. *That he will Govern himself exactly hereby*; without Affectation, Passion, or Corruption; not deviating from

from the Rule, that is too strait to bend. 3. *That he will yet manifest great Candour, Moderation and Mildness; Not rigidly insisting on his own Right, without allowance for our Infirmities; Neither taking all Advantages that Power and Prerogative, or the strictness of the Law may give him against us; But fairly representing our Case with the most favourable Constructions, and to our own Satisfaction; leaving no room for either Complaint of, or Appeal from what he shall Determine.* 4. *That as he will not Acquit the Nocent for the sake of the Innocent, so neither will he Punish the Innocent upon the account of the Guilty.* But every Man shall bear his own Burden, according to what he himself hath done; without any advantage from any other pretended supererrogating Merits, or Disadvantage of others Faults he no way occasion'd or shar'd in the Commission of, to be visited upon him (as in this World is threatened in Mercy) from past Generations, and which do Intricate and Obscure rather than Compleat and Display Justice. That, 5. *Rewards and Punishments will hence be proportion'd exactly to Deserts; And as, He that Soweth much, shall Reap much; and* 2 Cor. 9. *he that Soweth little shall reap little; So that Ser. Lu. 12. 47. want which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many Stripes: But he that knew not, and did commit Things worthy of Stripes, shall be beaten with few Stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.* Finally, 6. *That Deserts will be estimated only by Men's Works, [according to that they have Done.] Whereby only Good and Bad Men can be distinguished; as the Tree is known by its Fruit; and as he that doth* 1 Jo. 3. 7.

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Righteousness is Righteous, and he that committeth Sin is of the Devil; So can Men's Righteousness be judg'd of only by their Doings, and their Devilishness, by their Wicked Lives. Neither is there any other Common and General Rule, whereby all Mankind can be judged; Nor any other Thing to be judged of, besides the Good or Evil of Actions; Things that are purely indifferent, being neither Rewardable nor Punishable; For where there is no Law, there is no Transgression, neither is Sin imputed where there is no Law. And therefore a Righteous Judge cannot Reward or Punish for that which is neither Good nor Evil, and must therefore have regard only to what Works Men have done, according to the Gracious Terms of the Gospel, whereon such Distinction and Desert depends.

Rom. 4.15
—5.13.

The hearty Belief of all this is the most effectual Instrument of an Holy and Upright Conversation, which is the Sum and Design of all Religion: Being only to *Live as becomes those who expect thus to Appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, to receive the Things done in the Body, according to what shall have then been done, whether it be Good or Bad. Acting with Reason and Consideration, against all Passion, Humour or Sensual Inclination and Obstinacy. Being able to account for what we do; and taking frequent and strict Account, by Self-Examination, of what we do Do. Cherishing the Remembrance of this Important Doctrine in all its Parts Fresh and Vigorous in our Minds for the Government of our Lives; Being only concern'd to please God by whom we are to be judged, and aiming at nothing more for our Pains than to be acquitted at his Bar. Referring all Judgment to the Decision of this Trial; without unnecessary Censuring*

ring the Actions, or Unlawfully meddling with the final Doom of other Men that belongs to the Prerogative of God, and neither *can nor need* to be determin'd till brought before him. *Submissively bearing with the Difficulties of Providence in the mean time*; Without inquiring into its Secrets, that oft occasions Atheism or Heresies; Or unnecessarily Disturbing our Minds, with what is not for us to Understand; Or coveting to know it before the Time, when the whole Scheme shall be finished, and the Glory of the Discovery be ascribed, by all the World at once, to its great Governor and Judge, to the final Justification of his Wife and Wonderful Providence. In a Word; Not terminating such our Belief only in *Speculation*, but *endeavouring to make it the very Sense of our Souls*, whereof our Hearts may be most full, and our Minds most intent upon, and our Thoughts most familiar and best pleased with. And which is only to be effected by often Meditation, no *Fears* or *Distance* whereof ought to discourage us, since it cannot be altered or hindred. For whether we will think of it beforehand or no, we must be Judged; And unless it be often and seriously thought on, we shall be Damned too. For 'tis only a Wise and Timely foresight thereof, that can dispose and prepare for it, by abatement of our Fears, and amendment of our Accounts; And which if we vigilantly inure our selves to, will not only secure to us our most important Interest at last, but our only true Peace at Present, to support and Comfort us under all the Calamities of Life, and be a Perpetual Spring of the most Serene and Divine Joys for ever.

For which end, I shall therefore, now sum up the Notion wherein, according to this Explication,

tion, we profess to Believe what it concerns us always to be Mindful of; viz. That there is a Certain Unavoidable Judgment appointed, Privately and more Particularly to Doom at Death, and Publickly and Generally at the Resurrection; whereto our Lord Jesus Christ will Descend from Heaven with Majesty and Glory, in full Power and Commission to Judge All and Every one of Both the Quick and the Dead; Assembled in their own Proper Persons at the Bar of his Tribunal, in an Amazing Crowd, Necessitated to make their Appearance all together, to hear Pronounc'd and feel Executed either a Blessed Sentence of Absolution and Reward, or a Cursed Denunciation of Condemnation and Misery, according to what every Man shall be found, upon the most clear Evidence and Righteous Tryal, to have done of Good or Evil, by Thought Word or Deed, Only and All the time he was in his Mortal Body, Such a Notice hereof being intended to Caution our Behaviour, to Guide our Design, to Restrain our Censures, to Satisfy and Suspend our Doubts, to Affect and Possess our Minds, and all in order to Reform our Lives, and Save our Souls in this Great and Terrible Day of the Lord; Who, I verily am perswaded, being now in Heaven, at the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty will thus come thence to Judge the Quick and the Dead.

Which Coming of our Lord, that (with a Pious Awe and Well-grounded Hope) we may Expect; and attain sincerely to Love and Long for this his Appearance, God Grant by his Grace, in the same Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: To whom be Glory now and ever! Amen.

SER-

SERMON XVI.
ON THE
Eighth Article
OF THE
APOSTLES CREED.

Rom. xv. 16.

-----*Sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

THE two first Parts of our *Creed*, relating to *God the Father* and *the Son*, having been explain'd, we are arrived to the Third and Last Part, relating to *God the Holy Ghost*, compleating the Trinity of Persons in one Godhead: on Which the *Creed* was founded, and intended to enlarge our Profession of. Concerning whom we are taught to *Believe* both his *Person* (as he is the *Holy Ghost*, confess'd in the *Eighth Article* and Represented to us in the *Text*, and our *Priviledges* flowing from and depending on our being *Sanctified* by him as the Redeemed of Christ, in these Five Particulars;

lars; viz. Church Membership, Communion of Saints, Remission of Sins, Resurrection of the Body, and Life Everlasting, which are contain'd in the Four last Articles of our Creed, and comprised in the Distinct and Personal Operation of God the Holy Ghost, who (as we chiefly learn, in the the Third Place from our Catechism, to say) Sanctifieth me, and all the Elect People of God.

Who the
Holy Ghost
is.

Concerning the Person of the Holy Ghost, as mention'd in the Text and Creed, our Consideration must regard the Name, the Existence, the Nature, and the Office of him in respect to Us, and Our Duty and Behaviour thence consequent in relation to Him.

His Name.

I. His Name relates either purely to his Nature, or partly to his Personal distinguishing Operation. In the former respect he is called Ghost, in the Latter said to be the Holy Ghost. He is Ghost as he is a Spirit (which that Word means in the Saxon Language, pronouncing it Gast) Primatively and Properly signifying Wind or Breath; as the most Active and Powerful of Insensible Created Beings; and therefore by Analogy applyed to denote those excellent Intelligences which not being subjected to Sense, do by Sensible Operations manifest their Existence and the Activity of their Natures. The Principle of which is God, and who therefore is a Spirit, in the highest Degree of this Notion, as he invisibly actuates all things. And of the Three Persons in the God-head, the Third is Peculiarly and Eminent-ly so styled, it may be, in reference to the manner both of his Procession from the other Two, and of His Operation bearing some Resemblance to a Spiration. And he is, also, therefore Holy, both

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Essentially as God, and Operatively, as breathing Sanctity into Men by Virtue of his Personal Property, Distinguishing him (of the Three Persons in one Divine Nature, the *Holy Spirit*) to be Eminently *The Holy Ghost*.

II. *The Real Existence of such Distinct Being, Existence.* tho necessarily supposed in the Being of a God, who is a *Spirit*; (and which the *Sadducees* who owned a God denied not though they said there was *Act. 23.8* no Resurrection, neither Angel, nor Spirit, meaning only such Created Natures) yet it is not to be dissembled but that the Knowledge of the *Third Person* in the ever *Blessed Trinity* was a Mystery reserved for the Revelation of the *Son of God* only, Before whose Manifestation in the Flesh Man was not ripe or fit for it; Even *Holy Men of old* who spake as they were moved by the *Holy Ghost*, being *2 Pet. 1.21.* so little acquainted with him they spake by, that under the Law he seems to have been scarce known, those Passages of *Scripture* which point thereat being very rare and obscure. And till his *Descent in Cloven Fiery Tongues*, some that had been Baptised with *John's Baptism*, had not so much as heard whether there were, in so perfect and sensible a manner, as afterwards they experienced there was, any *Holy Ghost*. For his extraordinary Gifts had been long withheld, after Prophecy ceased; and had never been discovered in that marvellous Efficacy (the like whereof had been never so much as heard of) before; and in respect whereto, it is therefore observed by *St. John*, that, before *Christ's Glorification*, the *Holy Ghost* was not yet [fully Revealed as he afterwards should be in a Plentiful Effusion of his Excellent Gifts, tho from Eternity equally Existing, which sense

sense our Translation well supplies by rendring it *not yet given*] who before was never known so as afterwards his *Gifts* Revealed him, Clearing and Confirming his Existence, beyond the Dispute of every one that do not first Resist him, and to whom therefore we are *Baptised* together, *with the Father and the Son*, and can no more question the Being of One than of the Other, which is of equal Necessity to be Acknowledged by us.

Nature.

III. Consider we therefore (what hath more of Difficulty in it) *The Nature of this Holy Ghost*; which hath been so fully Revealed, In whose Name we have been Baptized, and in whom, according to our *Baptism* we Profess in the *Creed* to *Believe*. As such then we cannot in Reason account him other than a real and proper *Person*, and Singular Subsistent Intellectual Being, and not only an Accident, Quality, Energy, or Operation resident in or derived from God (as the *Socinians* hold) since they *Name, Article, Offices, Faculties, visible Representation, the very Place in our Creed* and share in the *Trinity of Persons*, attributed thereto in Scripture, are all such as are Personal. And nothing incongruous was ever assigned to him as such, unless when He is not mentioned (as he is not always) in the same Propriety of Signification, but only in his Gifts, Effects and Operations bearing the Name of him who is the Cause of them. Neither do we believe him to be only a *Person*, but such as is *Uncreated*; Being the *Spirit of God* the Creator of all Things to whose Nature nothing that is Created can belong. Against whom an unpardonable Sin may be committed. By whom Christ being *Conceived* of the *Virgin Mary*, was said to be *the Son*, not of

1 Cor. 2. 11.

Mat. 12. 31.

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of a Creature, but of God the most High; And he can neither be said to be Made by Christ as God, nor Subjected to him as Man, every Created Person being said to have been made by him, *Jo. 1. 3.* and all Things to be now put under his Feet. All *1 Cor. 15. 27.* which plainly shew him to be no Creature, and therefore we believe him to be Properly and truly God. To Him the Properties of Divinity are ascribed; and Lying to him is called a Lying to God; *Act. 5. 3. 4.* and his Inhabitation maketh Christians to become the Temples of God; and Divine Worship is directed to him, both in Baptism, and Apostolical Benedictions where he is joined with the Father and the Son, as equally the Object of our Faith and Worship, And yet we further believe him to be neither the Father nor the Son, but truly and really Distinct from both: For as much as he is called the Spirit of the Father, and is said to go out from him, to be sent by him, to be our Advocate with him, crying in our Hearts and interceding with the Father for us, and to have appeared in a Bodily Form, so as to be beheld, no Man *Jo. 1. 18.* having seen God, [The Father] at any time, nor can *1 Tim. 6. 16.* any Man see him. He is Distinguished no less from the Son; whose Spirit, in like manner, he is Called, and is said to be sent by him, to Descend upon him, to fill, lead or Actuate him, to receive from him what to teach, to be another Distinct Comforter to succeed him, speaking against the Son, and Blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, being mention'd as different Sins. And the Son said to do and suffer many Things Personally, which neither agree nor can be attributed to the Holy Ghost; who is clearly represented to be a Distinct Person, and as such professed in the Holy Trinity in whose Name we are Baptized; And wherein, also, we own him,

him, of those Three Persons in one Godhead, to be the *Third*. For as there is a *Number* in the *Trinity* whereby the Persons are neither more nor less than *Three*, so there is also an *Order* whereby of these Three Persons the *Father* is the *First*, the *Son* the *Second*, and the *Holy Ghost* the *Third*; even by *Virtue* of a necessary *Subordination* of the *Second Person* unto the *First*, from whom alone the Godhead was *Communicated* to him, And of the *Third Person* unto the *First* and *Second*, from both whom the Godhead was derived to him, but from him to neither; whereby he being neither *First* nor *Second*, must be, of the *Three*, the *Third Person* in the *Blessed Trinity*. And that, finally, as *Proceeding from the Father and the Son*; Being not from himself as the *Father* is, who is the only *First Principle*, his *Procession* from whom the *Scripture* expressly *Mentions* (and is not disputed by his *Oppugners*) and no less *Virtually* implies that he also *Proceeded from the Son*, by styling him the *Spirit of the Son*, as sent from him, inform'd by him, and the *Third Person* in order next after him in the *Trinity*. All which is summarily *Confess'd* in the *Creed* of *St. Athanasius*, where we say *The Holy Ghost is of the Father, and of the Son: neither Made, nor Created, nor Begotten, but Proceeding*; And whereby we conceive as much as is permitted us to *Understand* of so *Mysterious* a *Nature*; in deference whereto *Reason* is oblig'd to *Submit* and *Bound* its *Curiosity*.

Office

IV. The Office of this *Divine* being in *Respect* to us, as express'd, in the *Text*, to be *Sanctification*, is no other implied in this *Article* concerning him; wherein we style him the *Holy Ghost*, referring not only to the *Holiness* of his *Essence*, which

which is common to the whole Trinity, but to the Nature of his Distinguishing Operation, which of the Three Persons therein is peculiar to him, to sanctify us and all the Elect People of God, and whom therefore St. Paul calls the Spirit of Holiness. Because, as God the Father, particularly undertook for the Creation of Men, and God the Son for the Redemption of them, so did God the Holy Ghost for their Sanctification; (by whose Renewal we are therefore said to be saved; and to be purified through the Spirit;) for the effecting whereof his Operation and Assistance is distinguishable into these two Kinds, *Extraordinary* and *Ordinary*. Rom. i. 4.

1. *The Extraordinary Operation of the Holy Ghost* Extraordinary for Men's Sanctification is what was bestowed upon the Apostles and Evangelists, for the Planting and Establishing of Christ's Church and Religion; manifested in two several very remarkable Effects and Advantages of Gifts and Offices. Tit. 3. 5, 6.
1 Pet. i. 22.

1. *The Extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost* bestowed upon the first Planters of Christianity, were either such as conducted to their Information, or qualified them for the Publication thereof in order to Men's Sanctification. The Gifts of the Spirit bestowed in an Extraordinary Manner to inform of the Means of Sanctification, were what St. Paul calls *The Word of Wisdom, the Word of Knowledge, Prophecy* and *Discerning of Spirits*; wherewith the Apostles were Divinely Inspired, and taught to understand the Mind and Meaning of God, by the immediate Operation of the Holy Ghost, for the Ordering and Governing of his Church by the Word of Wisdom; for the Explaining and Applying of Types and Prophecies by the Word of Knowledge; for the Instructing and Edifying Profelytes by the Gift of Prophecy; and for the Dis- 1 Cor. 12. 8.

Heb. 1.1.

Jo. 14.26.

2 Tim. 3.

15, 16, 17.

Eph. 4.13.

covering and Distinguishing true Inspirations from mere Imaginations or Satanical Delusions by the Power of *Discerning of Spirits*. And tho it be also said that in *these last Days God spake unto Men by his Son*, (who might be supposed, while he was on Earth, to have instructed his Disciples herein, by outward and Humane Means, as one Man does another,) yet, by Reason of their slowness to learn, Lyableness to Mistake, and Aptness to Forget, the *Coming of the Holy Ghost* was also Promised, who was to *teach them all Things, and bring all things to their Remembrance, whatsoever Christ had said unto them*. Whence the Means of their Information is expressly said to be by an *Unction from the Holy One*, and in which manner the *Cannon of the Scripture* came to be Compleated; containing a full account of the Divine Will concerning the Terms of Salvation; which are the Inspirations of the *Holy Ghost* for Man's *Sanctification*; And all Scripture said both to be *Given by Inspiration*, and to be able to make us *Wise unto Salvation*; being *Profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be Perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all Good Works*. Beyond which there is neither *Proof* nor *Need* of any *New Revelation*, by such immediate Operation of the *Holy Ghost*, who concluded all his *Information* of the Means of *Sanctification* and Condition of *Salvation* herewith. And which was Peculiar to the *Apostolick-Age* and *Infancy* of the *Church*; Ceasing therewith, it being grown up to *Manhood*, unto the *Measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ*; after which there was no other way of *Revelation* or coming to the Knowledge of the *Christian Religion*, than by the *Written Word of God* thus Gi

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ven by the *Holy Ghost*, whereby all Pretensions to the contrary are justly accounted by us now Spurious and Impious.

The Gifts of the Spirit, in like manner bestowed, to Qualify for the *Publication* of such Divine Informations, whereby Men were to be *Sanctified*, were those other Extraordinary Spiritual Endowments (mentioned by the *Apostle*) of *Faith*; of 1 Cor. 12. the *Gift of Healing*; of *Working Miracles*; of 9, 10. Foreshewing Future Event by *Prophecy* strictly so called; of *Divers kinds of Tongues*; and *Interpretation of Tongues*; whereby the *Holy Ghost* enabled the first Planters of our Religion, and Successors of Christ, to Divulge and Propagate what they had been Divinely Taught themselves; and to witness the Truth of what they said; till all was confirm'd and established that was necessary for Men to learn, in order to be thereby Reformed and Saved; and without which this had been impossible, in a Way consistent with Divine Wisdom and Humane Freedom. Therefore are these Miraculous Gifts called the *Manifestation of the Spirit*; and the Word accompanied therewith said to be spoke in *Demonstration of the Spirit* as well as of *Power*; Being beyond what was Natural, and what was peculiarly the Operation of the *Holy Ghost*. —v. 7. —v. 2, 4.

2. Hence also, proceeded those *Extraordinary Offices*, suited to these *Gifts*, for the effecting of the same great End of Mens *Sanctification* by the *Holy Ghost*, reckoned up in order by St. Paul, as set, and miraculously provided in the Church. First *Apostles*, to whom seems to be Appropriated the *Word of Wisdom* as to the Highest Office for the Governing of the Church; *Secondarily Prophets*, whose Peculiar Gift was the *Word of Knowledge* for expounding the Old and Uttering New Prophecies; —v. 23. Eph. 4. 11.

phesies; *Thirdly Teachers*; elsewhere called *Evangelists*, who were eminently endowed with the Gift of *Prophecy* for Dispensing the Gospel by their Writings and Preachings; And after that follow *Miracles, Gifts of Healings, Helps, Governments, Diversities of Tongues*; which qualified some for *Pastors and Teachers*. (as they are called for Distinction also) Not all being *Apostles*, Nor all *Prophets*, nor all *Teachers*, &c. Yet all thus Peculiarly Endowed and Distinguished by the Miraculous Operation of the *Holy Ghost*, for the Perfecting of the *Saints*, for the Work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the *Body of Christ*: Till the Gospel State should be settled, and the Church of Christ Founded and Built to endure to the End of the World, and we all come in the Unity of Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ. In which State Sanctification may now be attained in an Ordinary stated way, which was necessarily first established by the *Holy Ghost* in an Extraordinary manner, by such Miraculous Gifts and Offices; That afterwards ceasing as useless in Future Ages, which was only needed in, and peculiar to that First Age. Whereby was fulfilled (as St. Peter assures us) the Prophecy of Joel (when the *Holy Ghost* at Pentecost descended upon them) of God's pouring out his Spirit, in the last Days, upon all Flesh, And the Promise of our Saviour to his Disciples of sending them another Comforter and Advocate, both effectually to supply his Absence and Plead his Cause hereby. And against this Extraordinary Office of the *Holy Ghost* it is, that the Unpardonable Sin is Committed; it being against the Gift of Miracles, and casting out Devils, that the Pharisees sinned, by reproaching it

—v. 12.

—v. 13.

Aa. 2. 16.

as *Magick*, when our Saviour caution'd against this Sin as not to be forgiven, neither in this World, *Mat. 12. 24. 32.* nor in the World to come; Neither *Moses* nor *Christ* having provided any Expiation for what withstood and frustrated Gods last Dispensation and Means of begetting Belief in Men.

2. But besides this *Extraordinary Work* of the *Holy Ghost*, by such *Gifts* and *Offices* to effect Men's *Sanctification* (whereby only a more sure and lasting Foundation was design'd to be laid suitable to the Structure that was to be set and rest thereon) There are *Ordinary Operations* of the *Holy Ghost*, which tho no less *Supernatural* and *Miraculous*, yet are common to Persons of all Times and Places, whereby,

1. *Sanctification* is wrought in particular Persons; by a Renewing of our Nature; and begetting insensibly in us, thro our co-operation, inward Graces; which are said to be the *Fruits of the Spirit*; Springing from and growing by the Divine Influence of the *Holy Ghost* on the Humane Nature, which is Degenerated and of it self indisposed, and averse to every Thing that is Good. *Gal. 5. 22.*

Which Effect is mention'd in the Scriptures by great variety of Expressions; By *Conversion*, and turning from Sin to God; by *Repentance* from dead Works, and unto Life; By *Regeneration*; By being Born again; By *Renovation*, and being made New Creatures, and New Men; By putting off the Old Man, with his Deeds, and putting on the New Man, which is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that Created him; By *Resurrection* from the Dead, and rising to Newness of Life; By *Purification*, and being Wash'd and Cleans'd from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit. By all which, and the like external Marks and Differences, is signified this internal Work of

Sanctification by the Ordinary Operation of the Holy Ghost.

29 Illumi-
ation.

AG. 16.
14.

Jo 16. 13.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

Eph. 1. 17.
18.

Phil. 1. 29.

2. *The Means and Way* whereby this is effected, is, 1. *By Illumination.* Both Clearing Truth to the Mind, and clearing the Mind for Truth; so as to Quicken Apprehension, and Brighten the Understanding, and *open the Heart*, whereby more and new Light breaks in, and further Discoveries are made, and new Improvements attain'd, and what was revealed by the *Inspiration* of the *Holy Ghost* at first, rendred Intelligible and Effective to us by the *Illumination* of the same now. Who is therefore said to *Lead [into] all Truth*; not only *Unto* it, by *Revelation*; But *into* it, within the very Inmost Recesses thereof, so as to take in the Lustre and Power of its Virtue, which before the *Natural Man* received not, being foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned; even by the *Enlightning* Operation thereof. To which Purpose St. Paul prays in behalf of the *Ephesians*, that God would give unto them the *Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him*; The Eyes of their Understanding being enlightned; that they might know what is the *Hope of their Calling*. A Clear Perception and Resolute Perswasion of Mind, arguing immediate Influences from the Divine Spirit, which no External Instruction or Power of Natural Reason can effect, to penetrate those Opacities of Ignorance, and dissipate those thick Mists of Prejudice wherein Nature and Custom involve us. So that *Faith* is clearly, even in its Act, as well as Object, the *Gift of God*. And Christ is not only given unto us in whom we Believe, but it is also (as St. Paul teaches) given us, in the *Behalf of Christ* to believe on him. *Revelation* not being sufficient with

without *Illumination*, and *this* as much as *that* the Work of the *Holy Ghost* for our *Sanctification*; Which he further promotes,

2. By *Propension and Inclination*; Bending the *Inclination* Will; and mollifying the Heart, and disposing *on* the Affections to an hearty Compliance with the Duty cleared and opened to the understanding. We being, as *Natural Men*, not only Blind to Discern, Dull to Conceive, and Backward to Undertake the necessary Duties of our Religion; But we are also Dead, and Heartless, and Indisposed to perform them; And when *the Spirit*, being illuminated, is *Willing*; Yet our *Flesh*, or Natural Power, is found *Weak*, and no fit Match to Encounter that Potent Confederacy of Spiritual Enemies which continually, with open Violence Invade, or by Clandestine Wiles watch to Circumvent and Supplant us. So that, as we necessarily stand in need of a Continual Prevalent Force to Overpoise our Natural Inclinations, to subdue the Reluctancies and Check the Importunities of Sense, to Correct Bad-Nature, and Reclaim from Bad Custom; so is it the Work of the *Sanctifying-Spirit* of God to *strengthen with* Eph. 3.16. *might in the inner Man*; to help our *Infirmities*; and Rom. 8.26. *to work in us both to Will and to Do, of his own good* Phil. 2.13. *Pleasure*: We being no more indebted to the *Holy Ghost* for the Understanding we have of Religion than for our Love and Propension to Practice it. Who further carries on this his Work of *sanctifying us*,

3. By his *Direction and Governance* of our *Directions* Actions; Leading and Moving, and Preserving us in the Ways of Obedience to God's Holy Will and Law, Actually to Do and perform those Things which are acceptable and well-pleasing in the sight

- light of God. That being no less true of our
 Pf. 104. 29. Spiritual, what the Psalmist spoke of our Natural
 Life; *If thou hide thy Face, we are troubled; if thou
 take away our Breath we die, and return to our Dust:*
 We being not one Moment any thing at all, with-
 out the Presence of God's Grace to preserve and
 Jer. 10. 23. conduct us; *The Way of Man not being in himself*
 (as the Prophet observeth) *it is not in Man that*
walketh to direct his Steps. It is the Lord (says the
 Pf. 37. 23. Psalmist) *that ordereth the Steps of a Good Man, and*
upholdeth him with his Hand. The best of us being
 Vain and Uncertain in our Opinions, Fickle and
 Irresolute in our Purposes, Slow and Heavy in
 our Proceedings; apt to faint and falter in our
 Practice; but while under the Conduct of this
 Powerful and Careful Guardian. Wherefore if
 Gal. 5. 25. *we live in the Spirit, and are quickened by his Re-*
novation, we are also exhorted to walk in the Spi-
rit, and follow his Guidance and Manuduction
which Insinuates Good Thoughts and Kindles Ho-
ly Desires, and Comfortable Hopes; sustains us
under all Difficulties and Troubles; Disposes and
Assists our Devotions, by his Powerful Intercessi-
 Rom. 8. 26. *ons for us with God and moving Cry and Impor-*
 tunity in our selves to him; and seasonably Check-
 Gal. 5. 16. *ing and Restraining from Sin; So that if we walk*
in the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the Lusts of the Flesh;
 Rom. 8. 14. *and as many as are ruled by the Spirit of God, they are*
said to be the Sons of God. It being only by the
 Spirit's Conduct that we are what we should be, or
 Do any thing as we ought to Do. And to this
 End, also, *we are united to Christ, and made Mem-*
 bers of that One Body of which our Saviour is the
 Head, so as to derive Nourishment from him,
 and be made one with him, even Holy, as he who
 hath

Union.

hath called us is Holy, in all manner of Conversation; For by One Spirit, we are all Baptised into One Body, says St. Paul; And hereby we know, says St. John, that God abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. Yea.

1 Cor. 12.

13.

1 Jo. 3. 24.

5. By him we have Assurance of our Acceptance with God thro Christ; The Spirit is self bearing Witness with our Spirit that we are the Children of God. And therefore says the Apostle again, The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost filling with Joy unspeakable, and Peace which passeth all Understanding, not a little conducing to the Interest of our Sanctification. And, finally, to the same great End doth the Holy Ghost Act for us,

Acceptance

Rom. 8. 16.

— 5. 5.

6. By Sanctifying and setting apart a Succession of Particular Persons for the Office and Duty of the Ministry. The same Spirit that Miraculously Instituted those Extraordinary Offices Peculiar to the First Age, Commissioning a Succession and Promising Assistance, tho not of the same, yet of the like Offices to supply, in their Stead, the Necessities of the Church, in all times to the end of the World. And therefore did Christ tell his Apostles, As my Father sent me, viz. with Power of Commissioning you to succeed in this Ministry, when I am gone; so send I you, viz. with Power of Ordaining others to succeed in like manner. Pursuant whereto, we find them Ordaining Bishops in all Churches; as St. Paul did Titus at Crete, and Timothy at Ephesus; and these in a Constant Succession, were to Ordain others; Timothy being Commanded by St. Paul, to commit what he had heard of him to faithful Men, who should be able to teach others also. And with these in their Work of the Ministry, God hath promised to be present and assistant in all after Times, as he had been

Setting apart a Ministry.

Jo. 20. 21.

2 Tim. 2. 2.

Mat. 28.
19, 20.

Act. 20. 28.

been with the *Apostles* in the First Age; *Christ* sending his Disciples to teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, assuring them he will be, in that Employment, with them, and their Successors, even unto the End of the World. Who therefore are bid to take heed unto themselves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them Overseers to feed the Church of God; being ordain'd to Intercede between God and his People; to send up Prayers for them, to Bless them in the Name of God, to Teach the Doctrine of the Gospel; to Administer the Holy Sacraments instituted by Christ, and to perform all Things requisite for the Perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ.

By these and the like means, in this endearing and effectual Way, doth the Holy Ghost ordinarily act and provide for Men's Sanctification.

In a manner

3. The Manner and Degrees of effecting which hereby; as it is various and beyond our Measure to comprehend, so are we no otherwise concern'd to know, than to be well assur'd of its being effectually wrought in our selves, and careful so to ascribe all Good to God, as to be sure we ascribe nothing to him that is Evil, or any ways unworthy of him; without daring to reduce the Operations of the Holy Spirit in Sanctifying Man's Nature to any Certain Rule or Standard. And therefore we Believe that this is not necessarily wrought,

Not irresistible

1. In an irresistible Manner; which, tho it may and hath been in some, yet is it not the Ordinary Method of the Sanctifying Grace of God; and would be contrary to Reason; because no Man would then become Holy upon Choice, but thro
meer

meer force and violent necessity, that destroys the Virtue of such a Reformation; And the Reformation of those upon whom the *Spirit* did not work *Irresistibly*, would be Impossible; which is the Utmost can be said to excuse Impenitency. Besides this is plainly contrary to the constant tenour of the Bible, which supposes that men do very frequently *resist the Grace* and Holy Spirit of God; and assigns only that for the Reason of their continued Impenitency that hinders their Salvation, and thence both Laments the Condition and Aggravates the Guilt of all Obstinate Sinners. Neither on better Ground can it be believed by us, that,

2. *In the Spirits Sanctifying us, we are wholly Pass-* *We being*
five, contributing nothing thereto, wherein God *wholly Pass-*
 does all, and we do nothing at all. This being *five*.
 contrary to what Experience shews, and the Scriptures Command, and is the greatest and justest Discouragement in the World to all Endeavours of Reformation, and seems to Charge upon God the Ruine and Destruction of Impenitent Sinners. And therefore as without the Powerful excitation and aid of the *Holy Ghost* no Man can Reform, so without our Endeavours neither can the *Holy Ghost* be properly said to Help and Assist those that do Reform. And tho, sometimes, He may do more than Help, and in an *Irresistible* manner Convert a Sinner without his own Endeavours; Yet this is rare, and neither what he hath promis'd nor is wont to Do; Who will have us to depend upon no more than his *Helping our Infirmities*, and therefore, tho it be God that *works in us to Will and to Do*, yet he obliges us to *Work out our own Salvation*; Our Concurrence and Endeavours no way derogating from the Grace
 of

of God, while we ascribe all the Good we do to
its Assistance, to which it is comparably more
due than to our own Activity and Endeavours.

1 Cor. 15. Therefore saith St. Paul, By the Grace of God I am
10. what I am, and his Grace which was bestowed upon me
was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly,
— Yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me.
Neither is it reasonable to Believe that Sanctifica-
tion is always wrought,

Not Instan-
taneous.

3. In an Instant, and all at once, without any sen-
sible Steps and Degrees. Which, tho the Power
of God is able to effect, and sometimes does it very
thoroughly and very suddenly, and may always be
said to have been begun in an Instant; Yet all the
time a Man is tending towards a Reformation,
and struggling with his Lusts, and confirming his
Resolutions in Well-Doing, be it longer or shorter,
according to the Power of Evil Habits, and
the Different Degrees of Divine Assistance, so
long may the Work be said to be going on leisure-
ly; and which usually is a very Considerable time
from the first beginning of it, to its coming to a
fixt and settled State. Whence the Scripture speaks
of some as nearer to a State of Grace than others;
and compares Mens attaining thereto to the Grow-
ing of Seed sown in the Ground, that Springs up and
ripens gradually; and to Leaven that diffuseth it
self through the whole Mass of Bread by Degrees;
and which well agrees with what Observation Ex-
perience creates of the Operation of the Holy Ghost
in his Sanctification of Mens Natures, whether by
a Pious and Religious Education, or reclaiming
from a Vicious Course of Life, wherein he General-
ly moveth with Consent, and Endeavours, and by De-
grees, as most consistent with his own Glory and
our Encouragement.

And

And thus are we *Sanctified by the Holy Ghost*; whose Office it is to make Men *Holy*; for which he hath effectually provided by Extraordinary Gifts and Offices bestowed at first, and still continues to Effect in every Age by his own Operation in an Ordinary Constant Influence, by Instituted Means, in the most agreeable and becoming Manner.

V. From the Premises it only Remains that we Reflect upon our Duty in reference thereto; and which is that, to which our Belief in the Holy Ghost must necessarily be understood to Oblige us. Even

Inferences.

1. That we learn whence all our Sanctity is derived to us: which is neither Innate nor Acquired from any Natural Cause; nor owing to either Parts or Endeavours; being a Divine Work, and Wisdom from above, wherein God gives us Beyond what otherwise is attainable.

2. That we therefore Gratefully own our Obligations, where 'tis due, for the same. Ascribing all our Good to God, and taking the Shame of our Evil to our selves; As being Helpless, and Recoverable only by Divine Grace; which is the Author of our Spiritual Life, of all Good Dispositions in us, of all Good Works performed by us, of all Happiness we are capable of; rendering to him with the profoundest Humility, all Thanks and Praise, Assuming nothing to our Selves, because owing all we have, or are, to the effect of his Holy Office.

3. That we therefore be especially careful to suppress all Proud Conceit or Supercilious Boastings of our seeming Sanctity; which derogates from the Glory of Grace; and intercepts its Influence; and Subjects us to the Vanity of an Ungovernable Mind, misleading

1 Cor. 4.7

leading and loosing us from under the Conduct of the *Holy Spirit*, who *resisteth the Proud* and giveth *Grace* no longer than Men are Humble; and needs the Consideration of such as talk of *Merit* and *Perfection*, and place most of their Profession in *Pomp* or *Singularity*, to attract Mens Eyes and Esteem from every Body else, to themselves as the only or most Pure and Sanctified People. This being to *Glory*, as if they had not received, what is not otherwise to be had; and to usurp the Authority of the *Cause*, who are only concern'd in the Joy of its *Effect*.

4. That we, further, thankfully rest our selves Contented under the Sanctifying Influences of Common *Grace*, as being willing to be saved in Gods own Way; bewareing to presume of Expecting, or to pretend to the having of Special and Peculiar Spiritual Endowments. Which is the intollerable Vanity of *Enthusiasts*, and more Particularly of the *Quakers*, who commonly Teach and Labour to make their Followers believe, that all besides themselves (and more especially We of the *Church of England*) do wholly throw of all Inspiration of the *Holy Ghost*, and rest only in Outward Forms; whilst they are the only People that Follow the *Light within*, and are led into all Truth by the Conduct and Inspiration of the *Holy Ghost*; and that therefore they are the only true People of God, who own and partake of New Revelations from him. Whereas it is manifest that all Good *Christians* (and particularly of the *Church of England*) do own and rely upon the Operation of God's Spirit as much, tho not in the same manner, as any do or need for *Sanctification*; which the Doctrine of our *Thirty Nine Articles* and *Catechism* and *Forms of Prayers* and *Offices* in our *Liturgy*,
do

do abundantly Testify. But yet indeed we declare we neither do nor dare pretend to the Operations of the Spirit in the same Manner and Degrees as they do; and for which they are so far from having any Ground in *Scripture*; that they professedly thereby overthrow the Authority thereof, as no Sufficient Rule for their Faith and Manners. For they pretend that the *Holy Ghost* Inspires them, as it did the *Prophets* and *Apostles* who Writ the *Scriptures*; and that therefore they are as much obliged to submit to its Suggestions within them now, as to the Revelations made heretofore by those. Supposing their own Opinions and Imaginations to be all Divine Revelations, and of equal Authority with the Bible. Pretending to receive Particular Messages immediately from God; and to Foretell and Pronounce Judgments from him, upon equal Power and Assurance with any of the Inspired *Holy Men of Old*; yea and in the same way too; even by Outward Revelation in Visions and Dreams, &c. This we confess, indeed, is what is not pretended to in our Church, neither allowed in God's Word, nor is needed to make Men Holy; which is all we expect or are allowed to desire from the Spirit's Operations, in his settled ordinary Course of Acting, upon Men's Souls for Salvation. And therefore the *Quakers* Uncharitable Condemning Us, because we believe ourselves to be *Sanctified*, without being immediately Inspired, as the *Prophets* and *Apostles* were, by the *Holy Ghost*, is so far from being justifiable, that it gives us but too just an Occasion to Condemn them for their unreasonable Pretensions thereto, whereby they are forced to wrest or disannul *Scripture*, and destroy the certainty of Christian Belief, which was fixed above Sixteen

Hundred Years ago, by a Dangerous Heresy that hath scarcely been divulg'd above fifty Years. And what a strange and shameful thing is it, for Christians to be so fond of Novelty, as to be deluded by this Old Artifice of the Devils; whereby he hath been wont to insnare and mislead the Ignorant and Weak? Tempting them by the Itch after New Revelations, whom he could not catch by Immorality and open Prophaneness and thereby make them transgress against the Old. God justly suffering such to fall under the Tyranny of a False Spirit, that would not confine themselves to the ordinary Measures of the Truth; Men that would be more than Sanctified, being justly thus Deserted by the Holy Ghost. In reference to which (to Proceed) it consequently is incumbent

5. That we sedulously Invite and Cherish, by all Instituted Means, the Holy Ghost to carry on and Perfect his Great Work of Sanctification in Us: As being that for which he is given, and all we need sue to him for, and without which he can be of no benefit to us: Seeking after him in his Word, which is always accompanied with his Power, and is therefore styled the Administration of the Spirit, and the Law of the Spirit of Life: Duly frequenting the Use of his Holy Sacraments whereby he is conveyed by visible Representations: Incessantly Crying for his Aid by fervent Prayer, as being the Condition on which he is Promised to be given to us: Harkning attentively to his soft Whispers and Holy Suggestions: Admitting gladly his gently Illapses: Complying with his kindly Motions: Preparing for his Entertainment and continued Residence with us, by Cleansing our selves from all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, that we may be fit Temples for him to dwell

Luk. 11.
13.

in,

in, where he may meet with nothing to *Grieve* or *Resist*, or *Quench*, or *Vex* him to make him forsake and reject us, but may dwell and strive in and with us till he hath sealed us up unto the Day of *Redemption*. And to this End, Eph. 4.30.

6. That we hence, also, animate all Good Resolutions and Endeavours; being seconded by, and in Union with this Almighty Helper, that can so succeed the weakest of our Hearty and Sincere Labour that it can never be in vain in the Lord; Be Duty never so Difficult, and Corruption never so strong; Our help is in One that is mighty to save, that leaves no Room for Despair, nor ever suffered any to be Lost without refusing his Assistance to save. But above all, it hence then concerns,

7. That we all thoroughly Examine to Inform and Acquaint our selves with the Effect of the Holy Ghost's Operation in our own Particular Sanctification by him: Considering what Illumination we have received from him in our Minds; what Influence hath been impressed upon our Wills and Affections; How far our Actions are Governed by his Guidance; What Assistance and Comfort we have felt, and what Advance we have made by his Secret Proceedings with us in the Great and Mysterious Work of our Sanctification. This being his Work, whereon all our Interest depends; and which may be known by us; and concerns us to know, being liable and apt to disregard and be deceived about it, and where yet a Mistake or Neglect is Fatal; and whereby alone we can Experimentally confess the Blessed Spirit to be the Holy Ghost; without which our Faith in him will be only Nominal; and increase both our Conviction and Misery, it being of little Use or Comfort to us, that

we Believe there is an *Holy Ghost*, if we can find no Ground to Hope, that we our selves are as yet made *Holy* by him. Consider therefore very Particularly and Seriously with your selves,

1. *What Alteration you perceive in your selves now to what you were formerly.* For where the *Holy Ghost* hath been at Work, there evermore is very great and visible Alterations. Many New Opinions begot, and many Old ones quite rejected; Many Things you loved, are now loathed; and many Things you were formerly Averse from, are now Embraced. There is a great difference in the Manner of your Living now, to what was usual, you neither Daring nor Desiring to Be or Do, what you Were and Did heretofore. Yea and,

2. *This Difference you will perceive to be much for the Better:* Even what you will be infinitely Pleased with your selves, and what will really make you to be better thought of among Men. The Work of the Spirit being purely *Spiritual*, that improves the Soul, which is the Man; and not only *Heals* but *Adorns* the Mind, which renders the Man *Easie* to himself, and *Beautiful* to Others.

Pro. 12. 26 *The Righteous Man being more Excellent, even than what he was once himself, and than what still are too many of his Neighbours.* If then the *Holy Ghost*, hath been your *Sanctifier*, you will find your Course of Life more *Spiritual*, and *Refined* from Earth and Sensuality, and *Aspiring* and *Tending Upward* more than formerly; abounding with those *Lovely Fruits of Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance*; (that every one will be ready to call you Blessed for, and you will feel your self

Gal. 5. 22

self to be so) instead of those Disagreeable Vices of *Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Envyings, Murthers, Drunkenness, Revelings, and such like*, that fill with Guilt and Shame, and meet with Contempt and Punishment) which Indulge the Flesh and *Quench the Spirit*. And therein,

3. *Your Improvements will be Sincere and Intire*; The Holy Spirit working out all Selfishness and Carnality; begetting an equal Likeing to every Grace, and Detestation to all that is Sin; Rendering Obedience Extensive to and Zealous in every Duty, out of a Desire to Please God and to secure Salvation. Yea, and this,

4. *Will be the Lasting and Constant Course of Life*. It will not be only by Fits and Starts; being more than sudden Moods or Flashes (tho it may not be denied but in case of prevailing Temptations, many an Interruption, and sometimes Intermission will be made, yet) being founded on Eternal Reason, and invigorated with an Almighty Power, it will always remain the Prevailing Principle, and denominate the Man *Holy*, tho a *Sinner*. — And more Marks of the saving Work of the Holy Spirit of God on Mens Hearts (tho Multitudes more have been sometimes given) are Needless and Inconvenient (where these are duly adverted to) for the Tryal of their Genuine *Sanctification*. It being no hard Matter to Discover, what requires more of Courage than Skill or Pains to Examine; Few Men being Ignorant of their Spiritual State, but who are so Wilfully; And none willingly disregarding it, but who know it to be so Bad, that they are afraid to consider it; which yet is the *End of this Faith*, in or-

der to the Salvation of the Soul; Nothing but Holiness recommending Men to God; who are no otherwise the better for their Belief in the Holy Ghost, than as they are effectually made Holy by him,

When therefore we Profess to Believe in the Holy Ghost; our Meaning intended may be thus Explain'd, viz. I believe that, besides all others whatsoever, to whom the Name of Spirit or Ghost is or may be given, there is Eminently one Particular and Peculiar Spirit; who is truly and properly a Person; Uncreated; Essentially God; Distinct from both the Father and the Son; Of the Three Persons in One Godhead, the Third in Order; Proceeding equally from both: Not only Perfectly Holy in Himself, but the Author of all Holiness in Man, begun in Extraordinary Gifts and Offices, and sealed to continue in ordinary Influences of Divine Grace, common to all; Producing real Effects of Holiness in our Sinful Nature; by Illuminating the Mind; Inclining the Will and Affections; Governing the Actions; Uniting to Christ, our Head; Assuring our Acceptance, thro him, with God, by the Adoption of Sons; And by a Perpetual Succession of a Ministry, continuing the Edification of the Church to the World's end: In a Natural and Gentle Manner; in Union with our own Sincere Endeavours; Gradually hereby Addressing himself to every Sinner, proportionably to his Needs and Improvements, to Change and Sanctify his Nature: All Good in us coming from him; to whom we are infinitely obliged for the same; Seeing nothing to be Proud of in our selves; Resting Content with Common Grace, that is sufficient to save us in God's own Way; Inviting and Cherishing every Proffer

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and Tender thereof; Animating our Resolution and Endeavours thereby; and carefully Regarding and Examining our State and Condition herein, on which depends the Certainty of our Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord. In which Extent, and to this End, I, also, Believe in the Holy Ghost.

To whom, with the Father and the Son, Three Persons in One Divine Nature, be ascribed all Glory Now and Ever! Amen.

THE

APOSTLES CREED.

THE

Y. 4 SERMON

SERMON XVII.

ON THE Ninth Article

OF THE APOSTLES CREED.

Acts ii. 47.

-----The Lord added to the Church Daily such
as should be saved,

THE Third Person of the *Blessed Trinity* (which was observed to be the Third Grand Object of the *Christian Faith*, and the Argument of the Last Part of our *Creed*) we have already Consider'd, in respect only to his own *Person*, as he is the *Holy Ghost*. The *Privileges* derived from and by him to us now follow in the subsequent Articles. The First whereof in order of Nature is *Church Membership*, and (what is concomitant therewith) the *Communion of Saints*; Profess'd to be Believ'd by us in the *Ninth Article*, expressing our Faith

in the Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints ; which in the Text is mentioned to be the Church to which the Lord added daily such as should be saved : Both Union and Communion being as plainly supposed in the One, as expressed in the Other ; The Notion of a Church implying Union, and Salvation appropriated thereto, supposing a Communion therein. Both which that we may therefore Profitably Explain, we shall inquire into the Nature and Affections of, 1. The Church, according to our Belief of it to be the Holy Catholick Church. 2. The Communion peculiar thereto ; And 3. The Import of our Professing to Believe the same.

I. The Church believ'd by us, (tho the Word be Ambiguous, bearing both in Scripture and Common Use diverse and different Senses, yet) in its strict and proper Meaning in our Text and Creed imports a spiritual Society, joyned to Christ their Head by Faith, and to each other by Charity or Love. Christ is the Head of the Church (as it is Govern'd by him, and Descended Originally from him) which is his Body united in it self, and knit together in Love to him.

The Church.

*Eph. 5. 23.
Col. 1. 18.
— 2. 2.*

1. Therefore this Church we believe to be but One. One ; As there is but One Body belonging to One Head. Which our Text and Creed, agreeable to other Scriptures, intimate by the Singular Number ; and the Nicene Creed expresseth to be One Catholick and Apostolick Church. Part whereof existed before the manifestation of Christ, by Faith in the Messiah to come (who all died in Faith, not having received the Promises, but having seen them) as far off, were persuaded of them and embraced them) and Part since Christs Incarnation, by Faith in the Messiah already come ; the Origination and Progress

Heb. 11.

13.

gress whereof was from Twelve Apostles, by whose Preaching was gathered unto Christ, under this new Dispensation of a more Perfect and Explicit Faith in him, a Church consisting of Thousands of Believing Persons, to which were daily added such as should be saved; And which, as it increased, came to be Divided into Many Distinct Churches, (inasmuch that we quickly read of the Church in such an Abuse, and in such a particular Place) yet all belonging to and United in One and the same Church. And so single Persons Professing Faith in Christ, are Members of the Particular Churches in which they reside; and all such Particular Churches are Members of this One General and Universal Church from whence they sprang. Whereof, further, those who have already attain'd to the end of their Faith, and enjoy the Salvation of their Souls with Christ in Heaven, are now said to be of the Church Triumphant; whereas we, who are still fighting against, and warring with the World, the Flesh, and the Devil here on Earth, are of the Church Militant. And in regard even to this State of the Church on Earth, it is also distinguished, according to the Internal or External condition of its Members, into Invisible; consisting only of sincere Believers, known only to the Lord, who is the Searcher of Hearts, and 2 Tim. 2. knows who are his: And Visible; comprehending the whole Body of Christians, visibly Professing Faith in Christ, whether they be sincerely obedient or not. Professors of all sorts are promiscuously included in the Church (the Time of Distinction and Separation not being yet come) and the whole Society of Men, that ever have been, or ever shall be, from the Beginning of the World to the Consummation thereof, however Disposed of,

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of, and Dispers'd. And they who have Formal-
 dy or Virtually, Nominally or Really, believed
 in Christ, and Professed Christianity, do make
 up the Body of Christ, and are united into One
 Church. They are Built upon one Foundation, *1 Cor. 3.*
 other than which no Man can lay. They Agree in *Eph. 4. 3.*
 one Common Faith; there being but One Lord and
 One Faith. They retain the Use of the same Sa-
 craments, being washed in the same Laver of Re-
 generation, and eating the same Bread and Drink-
 ing the same Cup, whereby they appear to be
 One People as the *Israelites* did, who were Bap-
 tised unto Moses in the Cloud, and in the Sea; And *1 Cor. 10.*
 did all eat the same Spiritual Meat, and did all Drink *2. 3, 4.*
 the same Spiritual Drink. They have all One
 Hope, and Expectation of the same Glory, wor-
 shipping for the same End, there being but One
 Hope of our Calling. They are Guided, Directed *Eph. 4. 4.*
 and Sanctified by the same Spirit; United in Love
 and Charity, being of one Mind, wishing one an-
 other Well, having Complacence in the Good,
 and Compassion for the Evils incident to each o-
 ther, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit *Eph. 4. 3.*
 in the Bond of Peace. They submit to the same
 Order and Government, by virtue whereof the same
 Christ ruleth in them all; who gave some Apostles, *— 4. 11.*
 and some Prophets; and some Pastors, and Teachers,
 for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Mi-
 nistry, for the Edifying of the Body, &c. So that as
 there is no Church, where there is no Ministry,
 so where the same Order and Ministry is, there
 is the same Church. By which Means, and for
 which Reasons Millions of Persons, and Multi-
 tudes of Congregations are United into One Bo-
 dy, which is the One Church we Profess'd to Be-
 lieve.

2. And

Hly.

2 Tim. 1.

9. 4

1 Tim. 3.

1. 5

1 Tim. 3.

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1 Tim. 3.

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Eph. 5. 27.

Catholic.

2. And this Church, however Complex, we also call *Holy*; It being *Universally* so, in respect to the *Vocation* by which all its Members are Called and Separated from the rest of the World and Devoted to the Service of God, and thereby related to him; called by the Apostle an *Holy Calling* in reference to the *Offices* appointed, and the Powers exercised in the Church, which by their Institution and Operation are Holy. In reference to the End and Design of Constituting a Church, by Incorporating Men into such a Body; which was to beget and increase Holiness in the World, and to purchase a *Peculiar People Zealous of Good Works*. And the Church answers this, Particularly in respect of the *Personal Holiness* of its *Sanctified Members*; from whom (as from its better Part) the whole derives its Denomination, whether such as are Heirs of Grace, or Inheritors of Glory. And the same Church (however mixt and allay'd at present) is designed to be perfected in Holiness hereafter; when *every Thing that Offends shall be cast out*, and the *Tares* separated from the *Wheat*, and all the Members actually belonging thereto confirm'd and compleated in Purity and Glory; and be presented to God, a *Glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but Holy, and without blemish*.

3. The same also we are taught to call the *Catholic Church*. Which Word, as it is not to be met with in our *Bibles*, so was it not anciently in our *Creed*, till occasion'd by the many Heresies and Schisms obviated thereby. And, being once inserted, it unanimously hath continued; to declare our Disclaiming of Faction, and Adherence to the Communion of the *Universal Church* derived and spread from the Common Head, being *Christ*

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and his Apostles. And, therefore, in Asserting its Catholicism, we signifie its Diffusiveness, as no longer confined to one Nation or Place as the Jewish Church was: The Partition Wall being broken down, Eph. 2. 14. and the Heathen given to our Lord for his Inheritance, Ps. 2. 8. and the uttermost parts of the Earth for his Possession; and the Gospel commission'd to be preached among Lu. 24. 47. all Nations; who are no longer Strangers and Foreigners, Eph. 2. 19. but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God. Comprehending all the several Churches on the Face of the Earth, and all Christians in those Churches, whether Sincere or Hypocrites, that make an outward Profession of Faith; (as all the Boughs of a Tree, however Spread, or however Sound or Rotten are united in one Common Stem, tho not equally deriving Sap from the Root.) And in this Notion, as it was opposed to the Donatists, about the Fourth Century, confining the Church of God to those of their own Sect in a corner of Africa; so do we still justly Oppose it to the Papists, who restrain it to Rome, which can be no more the Catholick Church, than it is the Whole World. This Church also may be called Catholick in relation to the Faith it holds, which ought to be the same in all Places; and in which sense Particular Churches are sometimes stiled Catholick, to signify only their Orthodoxy, as living in the Faith and Communion of the Catholick Church; in opposition to any Heretical Combinations and Factions. Neither is it less Catholick in respect to Doctrine; wherein are Taught all Things necessary to be known in order to Salvation: prescribing, moreover, an Universal Obedience; whether in respect of the Persons, obliging Men of all Conditions; or in relation to the Precepts, requiring the Performance of all and eve-

ry of the Evangelical Commands: Endowing with all *Graces*, whereby all Diseases of the Soul are healed, and Spiritual Virtues are disseminated: Exercising some Particular *Acts* which being done any where, are valid, and equally bind every where; being Catholick in Admission by *Baptism*, which being duly administred in one Church, makes a Man free of the whole Christian Society, and gives him a Right to all Christian Priviledges in all other Churches; and in Exclusion by *Excommunication*, which ejecting out of one Church deprives of Communion in every Church, without due Reconciliation again. And, Finally, it being of Universal *Continuance*, that hath actually Existed in all Ages, and will endure to the Consummation of all Things, *against* which the *Gates of Hell shall never prevail*, and *with which* Christ himself hath promised to be present *always even to the End of the World*, and whereupon its Existence hath been propounded as an Object of Faith in every Age of Christianity, and so will be as long as the Succession of Ages shall continue; those that are Believers being the Church; who if they Believe, must therefore believe there is a Church, that is established upon Promises which cannot fail. And therefore tho God may and does suffer many Particular Churches to cease, and even the Universal Church to lie for sometime obscure and almost hid, yet was it never extinct since first it was begun, nor shall it be permitted for Believers to be altogether extirpated and destroy'd; while the World endures, the Church being assured to continue therein.

Such is the *One, Holy and Catholick Church*, we Profess to believe and to hold Communion in.

And

Mat. 16.

18.

—18. 20

And which, we further add, that, we believe to be *One* without *Superiority*; *Holy* without *Infallibility*; and *Catholick* not without its *Enemies*.

It is *One* without distinction of *Superiority* in respect of it self; Having *One* only *Head*; who equally Called, and equally impower'd and sent the first Founders hereof. Among whom there was no difference nor distinction of Persons as to any Privilege or Superiority above others; No degree of Jurisdiction or Authority more or greater in *One* than every one; much less was any one appointed Prince or Ruler over the Rest. The Rock on which the Church is Built, being not the Person of *Peter*, but of *Christ* confess'd by him truly to be the *Son of God*; whose Confession is a Doctrinal Rock whereon the Church is founded; and by whose Ministry and Office (wherein all equally were invested) it was to be gathered and built up. Neither was the Power of the *Keys* given to one more than another; being not actually given when Promised particularly to *St. Peter*, and afterwards conferred equally upon all, by virtue of that Promise, when it was performed to any. And, Finally, when *Peter* alone was put in midd by his Lord to feed his Sheep, he was commanded to do but what he and the rest were equally obliged to do before; and what *St. Paul* charges the Presbyters of *Ephesus* to do afterwards, when he bid them take heed unto themselves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost had them Overseers, to feed the Flock of God; And what *St. Peter* himself also exhorted the Elders, whom he bid to feed the Flock of God; And to which Office he seems, by such a particular renewal of his Commission, to be restored; which he might be suspected to have forfeited by his Fall, whereof he

Without
Superiority.

Mat. 16.
18.

— 18. 18.
Jo. 20. 23.

— 21. 15.

Ad. 20. 28

1 Pet. 5. 2.

he was put in mind by the Triple Repetition that bore some Analogy to his Triple Denyal, and thereby intended to be recovered to the Equality of his *Apostleship*, by what in no wise could confer upon him any Superiority over the rest of the *Apostles*; neither known of, nor pretended to by him, nor own'd in him, but expressly disclaimed

v. 3. as being Lords over God's Heritage; which therefore is One in Equality, without any Ground of Distinction for Superiority.

Infallibility.

The Church also is *Holy* without infallibility: Altho not erring in the Fundamentals of Faith, so as ever to cease utterly to be; yet not being Infallible, so as to be wholly exempt from Error, since there can be no Member thereof Perfect in this Life; and the Certainty of Truth, being infallibly revealed, may be secured without it, and Errors may Assault where they shall never prevail; whereby Truth may be more discovered and better established. Less of Sincerity no where appearing than where Infallibility has been most pretended to; for which there appear therefore to be neither Necessity nor Evidence in the Church, which may be *Holy* tho Fallible.

It. Enemies.

And, Finally, we Believe the same to be also *Catholick* tho not without its *Enemies*; Not all being of the Church, tho the Church is opened to receive all. Whose *Enemies* are either *Open*, as *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Mahumetans*, who refuse to be incorporated into Christ's Body; or *Secret* and *Clandestine*, who being incorporated disunite and disturb the same; as *Hereticks* who obstinately maintain convicted Errors which overthrow Fundamental Truth; or *Schismaticks*, who without just Cause refuse Communion with, and separate

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rate from a Particular Church; or out of Ambition withdraw themselves from the Universal Church. But the Grand Enemy of the Church is in Scripture denoted by the Name of *Antichrist*, and called the *Man of Sin*, and *Son of Perdition*: The Mystery of whom is said to begin to work in the *Apostles Days*; coming with the Power of Satan; yet sitting in the Temple as God; seated in the Great City which then Reigned over the Kings of the Earth, and said to be Scituated on seven Hills; to be revealed in the last times; pretending to Miracles and Lying Wonders; Causing a great falling away from the Faith; whose End will yet be Destruction by the Sword of the Word, and Spirit of the Lord's Mouth, and Brightness of his Coming; When the Church shall then, in every respect, be intirely One; Perfectly Holy; and in respect of its own Members, Eternally Catholick.

H. The Communion peculiar hereto, we are taught to call a Communion of Saints: The Members of an Holy Church being reasonably presumed and intended to become such; either in Outward Esteem, or Inward Disposition; passing for Saints or Sanctified Persons while on Earth; and being Perfected really such when Glorified in Heaven; Every Member of the Church, being in some Sense a Saint; whose Communion, therein, is a joynt Fellowship in every Holy Thing pertaining thereto. And so we hereby express our Belief that the Saints of God living in the Church of Christ have a Communion, 1. With God the Father, whose Children they are, whose Resemblance they bear, and whose Favour they enjoy; where- by the Fellowship of such is expressly said to be with the Father. And so also, 2. With the Son: Who

The Communion of Saints.

With God the Father.

1 Jo 1. 3.
The Son.

Jo. 1. 16.

1 Cor. 1. 9.

The Holy
Ghost.

2 Cor. 13.

14.

1 Cor. 3. 16.

Angels.

Heb. 1. 14.

Lu. 15. 10.

Mat. 18. 10.

Glorified
Spirits.

took upon him our Nature, and bore our Infirmities and Sins; from whom alone we derive Merit and Salvation, and receive of his Fulness Grace for Grace, and are called unto the Fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ. As again, 3. With the Holy Ghost; whose Fellowship and Communion always Accompanies the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God; by whom we are Sanctified and United to the Father and the Son, and become Temples of his Residence in us. And, being thus honour'd with a Communion with the Blessed Trinity, it cannot be but that the Saints have a Fellowship, 4. With the Holy Angels; those Heavenly Courtiers, that will not be Strangers to the Favourites of their Sovereign; whose Will they fulfil in Ministering for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation; Making Joy in Heaven for our Conversion; Always beholding the Face of our Father for us which is in Heaven; Doing us many and Great Services, which we cannot perceive; and joyning in our Services to our Common Creator; Angels and Arch-Angels with us, and we with them, lauding and magnifying God's Glorious Name. And much more, as nearer allyed to us, may we be supposed further to have Communion, 5. With the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect; Who are still Fellow-Members with us of the same Body; and tho in a much greater Measure and Higher Degree, still Communicate with us in the same Graces, and Hope, and Duties, and Privileges; bearing Good Will towards us, whose Memory we Retain and Honour, in a due and proper Manner; so that Death cannot dissolve the Communion of Spirits with one another, which is founded on the Church, which tho Part on Earth, and Part in Heaven, is yet but one, and the same Society; trained

trained up in the same School, and in due time to be altogether advanced to dwell together in the same State of Dignity and Happiness.

But the Communion of Saints we are most sensible of at Present is, *Lastly*, What, either in Obligation should, or in Effect is maintained among *With all Christians* Saints, or Members of the Church Visible and Militant on Earth. *here on Earth.* Which is the Fellowship we have one with *1 Jo. 1. 7.* another, mention'd by St. John; And may be distinguish'd either as *Internal* or *External.* *Internally.* Internal Communion is that only which Sincere and Real Saints enjoy among themselves, which the Hypocrite cannot partake in: As the Benefit of the same Ordinances, the same Promises, the same Graces, and the same mutual Love and Affection; *keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace;* All being engrafted into the same Stock, receiving Life from the same Root, holding the same Head, *from Col. 2. 19.* which all the Body by Joyns and Bands having Nourishment ministr'd and knit together, increaseth with the Increase of God. The External Communion of *Externally.* Saints on Earth, is what is the Common Priviledge of all Professors of Christianity, wherein the Distinction of a Saint and Hypocrite can consist. Who have Fellowship in the same outward Ordinances and Offices (both being externally Baptized alike, making Profession of the same Faith; agreeing in the Acknowledgment of the same Principles of Religion; Hearing the same Word; Communicating at the same Table; Partaking of the same Christian Charity of Mutual Bounty, Advice, Assistance and Prayers.) Adhering to the same Government, making the same Visible Profession of Christianity, and agreeing in every Thing that is necessary to make them *Christians,* without distinguishing the Hypocrisy and Sincerity

Eph. 5. 11.

ty of such Profession. And therefore, as the *Hypocrite* cannot communicate with *Saints* in saving Graces, because then he would no longer be an *Hypocrite* but a *Saint*; So neither can a *Saint* communicate with an *Hypocrite* in his Sins, or have any Manner of Fellowship with the *Unfruitful Works of Darkness* that are reprobable, because then also he would no longer be a *Saint* but an *Hypocrite*.

Such then being the *Communion of Saints*, in such an *Holy Catholick United Church*; Proceed we to consider,

III. Lastly, *The Import of our Professing to Believe the same.* Which necessarily is.

The true
Church.

1. *To Convince us which is the True Church;* Which being but one, *Holy and Catholick*, there can be no other besides it; and whosoever then is not of this, can be of no *Church*; which containeth within it all that truly are so. Therefore, other *Faith*, and other *Practice* than what belong hereto as pretending to a newer Institution, cannot Institue any newer *Church*: So far as any differ from those of the *Holy Catholick Church*, they can be of none; to which all belong, and must unite. This also is,

No Salva-
tion out of
the Church.

2. *To Assure us that there is no Certainty of Salvation by Christ but in his Church.* The Primary Design and Intention of our Saviour in his Undertaking for us, being not to save particular Persons without Respect to a Society, but to gather to himself a *Church* out of Mankind, to Erect and Form a *Body Politick*, of which himself was the *Head*, and particular Christians the *Members*; and in this Method thro Obedience to his Laws and Government, to bring Men to Salvation. And therefore *Baptism*, whereby we are made Members of the *Church*, is compared to *Noah's Ark*, whereinto

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all were to enter, that would not *Perish with the World*; And *Christ* who is represented to us, as the *Head of the Church*, is also declared to be the *Saviour of the Body*. And therefore is it agreeably said in the *Text*, that the *Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved*. To which the Promises of Salvation are confined. And wherein alone it is a Covenanted Mercy, that may be claimed upon certain Conditions. To which God hath engaged himself in Faithfulness. Out of which, therefore, Men necessarily stand to Courtesie, and can Build at best only on Presumptions; and if ever such are saved it must be we know not how, besides Expectation, and without Claim upon Uncovenanted Mercy. Further, by such our Profession we are prompted,

3. To own thankfully the Dignity and Priviledge of our Church Membership; Whereby we are Called and Separated from the rest of the World to greater Hopes and Higher Favours. Being made Capable to secure our Happiness by Right and Title given us thereto. Entering into a nearer Relation and Friendship, and Fellowship with the Great God, his only Son, and the Blessed Spirit, with all the Glorious Society above, and all that are worth our Acquaintance or Knowledge here beneath; which is the utmost height of Honour and Happiness that any Rational Ambition can aspire to; and for which, whenever we look upon our selves, and remember the Condition we are called and advanced to, and the Advantageous Terms we stand upon, by being *Christians*, we cannot but own the Necessity of complying with the Apostles Exhortation; Giving Thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. But, above all, is the intent of such our Profession.

Duties of
Church
Members.

4. To Conform our Conversation suitable to our Church-Membership; that Confessing our selves to be Members of an *Holy Catholick Church*, in the *Communion of Saints*, we necessarily endeavour to preserve and promote *Sanctity*, and *Unity*, and *Communion*, and *Communication* therein; which are the essential Interests of it.

Sanctity.

For nothing can be more Natural than that our Belief of an *Holy Church*, and a Fellowship of Sanctified Persons, should engage every Particular Member to an *Holy Life*. Because the Constitution being Holiness, nothing but this can capacitate for its Happiness. Whence a Wicked Man is so far from being the better, that he is much the Worse, for being a Member among *Saints* in an *Holy Church*, as both his Guilt and Punishment is thereby aggravated: Whom nothing can Reform that remains in his Sins amidst such Helps and Advantages to reclaim him, and for whom no Punishment will be too Grievous, that is the Scandal and Disgrace of his Fraternity, and belies the Purity of the most blessed Society. For so St. John saith, that if we say that we have Fellowship with God, and Walk in Darknes, we lie and do not the Truth. The Wicked Life of a Christian plainly Contradicts and gives the Lye to this Article of his Creed; Neither can there be a greater Solecism in Nature, than to see a Saint by Profession, a Devil in Practice; a Member of an *Holy Church*, it may be, the Member of an Harlot or Drunken Club; holding *Communion* at once with *Saints* and *Sinners*, and reconciling to himself *Heaven* and *Hell* together. If therefore we believe the Church to be *Holy*, and profess our selves to be Members of the Church, and in *Communion* with the Holy Ones thereof, unless our own Hearts be also Sanctified, and our Conversati-

1 Jo. 1. 6.

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on blameless and Holy therein, the Church will eject and Saints disown us; For what Fellowship (says ^{2 Cor. 6.} St. Paul) hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? ^{14, 15.} And what Communion hath Light with Darkness? And what Concord hath Christ with Belial? Dissimilitude in Manners always begetting Disagreement in Affection.

And so, again, The Church being One as well ^{Union.} as Holy, and the Saints thereof in a Communion; therefore also does our Belief hereof engage every Member to preserve what in him lies, its Unity and Peace, by the Innocency and agreeableness of his Conversation. As Members of the same Body, that have need of one anothers Ministry, whereof the Welfare of the Whole contributes to the Good of each. And be therefore Christians Apprehensions and Opinions never so Different in the Undetermin'd Circumstances of Order or Worship in the Church, yet so long as they agree in the Fundamentals of Religion, which is the Unity of the Spirit, they ought not to make any Disturbance either by Imposing or Opposing Private Opinions to the breach of Charity; But to Observe the Laws of Good Order, provided by our Lord in such Cases, and to keep the Unity in the Bond of Peace; ^{Eph. 4. 3.} and with Holiness, to follow Peace with all Men; ^{Heb. 12.} Following Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace with ^{14.} them that call on the Lord out of a pure of Heart. ^{2 Tim. 2. 22.} Hereto the Observation of these Two General Rules would not a little contribute, viz. That Christians would avoid Differences as much as may be in the Church; And that where they cannot be avoided, they would yet, notwithstanding such Differences, behave themselves towards one another, so as to preserve the Churches Peace, without Interruption of Christian Charity, or Disturbance of Communion. The

First of these would be observed, by neither *Imposing Doubtful Matters as Terms of Communion*; Nor *Refusing yet a Compliance therewith, being Imposed, so far as Sin does not hinder*: The Latter, by taking all imaginable Care of expressing any manner of Dislike to the Persons of those whom we differ from; or of resenting their Differences as Personal Injuries; Moderating our Concern and Zeal by the weight only of the Controversies in Hand; And doing all we can by candid Interpretation, and tender Forbearances, to lessen and make up any seeming Breaches.

Communi-

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However, our Membership in such a Corporation, inviolably obliges us to *continue our Actual Communion, where we may without Sin, both in Doctrine and Worship*: Constantly frequenting the Publick Service of the Church we belong to our selves; and encouraging others especially all depending on us, to do so too. Looking on all such as hence highly Reprovable, who withdraw themselves either *Wholly*, thro Schism and Faction; or only in Part, thro want of Devotion and Profane Indifferency. For too many such there are who *wholly Separate* from the *Communion* of the established Church, not upon the Pretence of avoiding any Necessity of Sin, but either out of some Millike thereof (for pretended Corruptions of Worship or Discipline, for Prejudice conceived against the Person of the Ministers, for the Mixt-ness of Assemblies, or for greater Edification elsewhere) or on Pretence of serving God as well in Private; or thro a sensual Heart and Atheistical Mind that Slights and Neglects Divine Worship every where; or, finally, thro any and every little Impediment, for Convenience or Interest; all which, having nothing of Sin or Ne-

cessity

cessity in them, no way excuse such a Separation from the Guilt of *Schism*, and are inconsistent with our Profession of the *Communion of Saints*. And there are also not a few even in *Communion*, who, out of a senseless Indifferency and want of due Devotion, shamefully Mutilate it, by withdrawing their presence in Part, from the Assembly of *Saints*: some (we observe) attending the Service, but of some Days now and then; others but that (it may be) of Half a Day; some never making hast enough to come at the Beginning; Others neglecting to joyn in every Part they are present at; and some Parts of Worship being wholly rejected, or too seldom and unconstantly frequented by them; as is too apparent in the general Treatment the most sacred and solemn Ordinance of the Lord's Supper meets with among us. Whereby the Holy Society we profess to be of, is prejudic'd even by such irregularity of Demeanour in its Members. *Communion* being both the End of its Constitution, and Means of reaping its Benefit.

Finally, From hence necessarily follows, also, *Communion* our *Obligation to Communication*, not only in Affections, but in all Good Offices, in Alms and Outward Things; *As we have opportunity, doing Good to all, but especially to those of the Household of Faith*. Whence St. Paul exhorts particularly to the *Distributing to the Necessity of Saints*; And *to Rom. 12. do good, and to communicate forget not*; and calls the *Receiving Charitable Contributions, a taking up* Heb. 13. *on him the Gift and Fellowship [or Communion]* 16. *of ministring to the Saints*, Herein the First Christians remarkably abounded, to the *selling their Possessions, and having all things in Common, parting* Gal. 6. 10. *to all Men, as every Man had need; not to the Ex-* Act. 2. 44. *inction*

Mat. 25.
34, &c.

1 Tim. 5.
8.

tion of Propriety, but to the Intention of Charity. Hereby the Communion of Saints hath ever been manifested, and maintain'd in the Church of Christ, who hath intimated it to be what shall be expressly mentioned in our behalf at the last Judgment, when he shall Pronounce his Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World; For I was an Hungred, and ye gave Meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye cloathed me; I was Sick, and ye Visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me. Such Acts of Charity to any Poor Fellow-Member of Christ, are reckon'd, and will be rewarded as done to Christ himself; To Refuse which (short of Ability and Opportunity) is to deny our Head, and to withdraw our selves from his Body, and disown his Household; which is reckon'd to be a denial of the Faith, and renders worse than an Infidel.

Such an Holy, Peaceable, Conformable and Charitable Behaviour does our Profession of Church-Membership oblige every Christian to, by his Belief of the Holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.

The Sum of which Profession, then, amounts to this; That by the Sanctification of the Holy Ghost Men being called out of, and separated from the rest of the World, are incorporated into One, Holy, Universal Society; United to Christ as it's Head, and to One another, as Fellow-Members of the same Mystical Body; in distinct Communion with each Person of the Blessed Trinity; with Holy Angels, and with the whole Fraternity of Saints, whether that Part thereof which is already Triumphant in Heaven, or that which continues still Militant here on Earth, Pretended or Real;

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Real; Besides what belongeth hereto, there being no True Church; to which the Covenant of Salvation is confined; wherein great Dignity and Priviledges are obtained; And whereby every Member is obliged to live in Holiness of Life, in Union of Order, in Communion of Worship, and in Communication of Enjoyments; And in this Sense, and to such Purpose I declare my Belief in the Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints: And, with our Church, accordingly, in sincerity, thus Pray,

O Almighty God, who hast Built thy Church *Collect. for*
upon the Foundation of the Apostles and *St. Simon*
Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the *and Jude.*
Head Corner-Stone; grant us so to be joyned
together in unity of Spirit, by their Do-
ctrine, that we may be made an Holy Tem-
ple acceptable unto thee, thro Jesus Christ
our Lord! Amen,

Rom. iv. 7.

Blessed are they whose Iniquities are forgivened,
and whose Sins are covered.

THE Doctrine of Forgiveness, as it is the
most Important, so it is the most
Abused Point of our Religion. When
we say, We are of an Adam's right-will-
ness: And with it, we generally mean and under-
stand, more than by any other mistaken
Principle of the Christian Faith. For because,
we may be said; Men therefore scruple not to
continue sinning, though a Repentance of hav-
ing it, till it become as late as possible to be had;
they having themselves in 2d. by what was

SERMON

SERMON XVIII.

ON THE

Tenth Article

OF THE

APOSTLES CREED.

Rom. iv. 7.

*Blessed are they whose Iniquities are Forgiven,
and whose Sins are covered.*

THE Doctrine of *Forgiveness*, as it is the most Important, so it is the most Abused Point of our Profession. *Without it, We are of all Men most miserable: And with it, we generally ruine and undo our Selves, more than by any other Mistaken Principle of the Christian Faith.* For because, after we have never so grievously Sinned, *Pardon* may be had; Men therefore scruple not to continue Sinning, through a *Presumption* of having it, till it become at last *impossible* to be had; Hereby *hardning* themselves in Sin, by what was in-

intended to *deliver* them from it ; and rendring their State more *Damnable*, for being *Pardonable*. To prevent and correct which Fatal Error, and to secure the *Privilege* of so great a Blessing to our selves, I proceed to discourse this Point of our Faith (to which the Order of Method hath now brought us) being the Blessing of the *Text*, and the Doctrine of the *Tenth Article* in our *Creed*, expressing the *Third Privilege* depending on, and flowing from the Distinct Personal Operation of the *Third Person* in the *Blessed Trinity*; belonging to the last part of our *Creed*; and rightly following our *Church Membership* and the *Communion of Saints*; even the *Forgiveness of Sins*.

The Words of the *Text* are quoted by St. Paul *Psal 32.1* out of the *Psalms*, expressing the *Privilege* of, by pronouncing a Blessing on what we profess as such in this *Article*. To illustrate which, I shall therefore

I. Explain the Nature of the Doctrine we Believe, of the *Forgiveness of Sins*. And,

II. Consider the *Blessedness* (express'd in the *Text*,) supposed by the *Privilege* mentioned in the *Creed*, thereby applying such Belief to the Benefit of our Practice.

I. To explain the Nature of the Doctrine, we Believe, of the *Forgiveness of Sins*, these Three Inquiries seem requisite. 1. What *Sin* is, that is to be *Forgiven*. 2. In what respects *Sin* needs *Forgiveness*. And 3. What such *Forgiveness* implies to answer that Necessity.

1. The Nature of *Sin* is perfectly defined by St. *John* to be a *Transgression of the Law*: All Contrariety or Opposition whereto, whether in *Disposition* or *What Sin is.* *Jo. 3. 4.*

Original
Sin.

Rom. 6. 6.

— 7. 5.

Artic. 9th.

Actual Sin
of,

Rom. 4. 15

— 5. 13.

Omission.

Commission
thro

or Act, or Habit, is therefore Sin; and whence, in General, it is commonly distinguished into *Original* and *Actual*. *Original Sin* is our Natural Corruption, derived to every one of us from our first Parents; whereby we are far declined from Original Righteousness, and necessarily inclined to Evil; so that the *Flesh lusteth* always *against the Spirit*; which is acknowledged to have the nature of Sin, both by the *Scripture* and the *Doctrine* of our own *Church*, as deserving the *Wrath of God* and *Damnation* in every Person born into this World. *Actual Sin* Proceeding from this Original Depravation of Nature, is the Personal Violation of any Law of God, either in *Thought*, *Word* or *Deed*; Which being all contained in his Revealed Word, derive Guilt and expose to Punishment, only when the Offence is against some *Sansation*; So that where there is no Law, there is no Transgression; neither is Sin imputed. And therefore to prove any thing Sinless and Lawful, it is not necessary to produce a Law or Example for it (since a Law Commanding it, would render it not barely Lawful but Necessary) but 'tis sufficient that there be no Law against it; which till forbid by some Law cannot have Sin in it. And which Laws being delivered to us, some in Negative, and some in Affirmative Precepts, hence further have Sins been distinguished into those of *Omission* and *Commission*. The Guilt of the Former is contracted when a Man neglects, or performs not as he ought, any Duty which God requires; of the Latter, when he doth any thing which God forbids. And which, further, according to the prevailing Faculty of the Soul, appearing most faulty in such Action, comes to be distinguished (Receiving their Denomination from those

those three distinct prime Faculties from which all our Actions flow, of the Understanding, the Will, and Affections,) into Sins of *Ignorance*, *Infirmity* and *Presumption*. For if the *Understanding* be most in Fault, not apprehending that Good it should, or not aright; the *Sin* so done, tho possibly it may have in it somewhat both of *Infirmity* and *Presumption* withal, is yet properly a *Sin of Ignorance*. If the main Fault be in the *Affections*, thro some suddain Passion or Perturbation of Mind; Blinding, or Corrupting, or but out-running the Judgment; as of Fear, Anger, Desire, Joy, or any of the rest; the *Sin* thence arising, tho perhaps joyned with some Ignorance or Presumption withal, is yet properly a *Sin of Infirmity*. But if the Understanding be competently informed with Knowledge, and not much Blinded or Transported with the incursion of any suddain, or Violence of any vehement Perturbation, so as the greatest blame must remain upon the untowardness of the *Will*, resolutely bent upon the Evil; the *Sin* arising from such Wilfulness, tho probably not free from all mixture of Ignorance and Infirmity withal, is yet properly a *Presumptuous Sin*, and which by often repeating grows at length into a Customary and *Habitual Sin*; which is the highest Aggravation thereof.

2. The Respect, then, in which any such Action needs Forgiveness, appears hence to be only (wherein its sinfulness doth consist,) its Guilt, or Contrariety to God's Law, obliging to Punishment necessarily resulting therefrom, being the only thing remaining of *Sin* in the Offender to be forgiven. For, as for the Deed it self; It, we know, does pass away together with the time in which it was done; insomuch that he who but once (for

Ignorance.
Bp. Sand.
Serm. on
Pl. 19. 13.

Infirmity.

Presumpti-
on.

Its need of
Forgiveness.

In-

Instance) kills another Man, doth commit at that one time *Murder*, and at no time after can be said to do so; and which being once Done can never after be undone; Yet the Guilt remains, that still denominates such an One a *Murderer*, and subjects him to the Wrath of God due to that Sin, till it is remitted; which then renders the Action, tho not undone; yet, which is equivalent, no longer Imputable, nor Obliging to Punishment as done. And therefore.

What For-
giveness
thereof im-
plies.

3. *The Forgiveness Sin needs; or is capable of, consists of taking off such Guilt or Obligation to Punishment; which removes the Action only as to its Imputation, which is not removable as to its Existence; and upon which necessarily followeth a dealing with the Delinquent as if Innocent, whose forgiven Sin, is as if it had never been committed, nor ever brought him under any such Guilt or Obnoxiousness to suffer for it. According hereto the Scriptures both Reason and Discourse; Calling our Sins by the Name of Debts, and those that commit them Debtors; because like Debts, properly so called, they oblige to Payment, and in case of failure, to suffer condign Punishment for them; the freeing from which Obligation, is therefore the Release of that Debt, tho unpaid, yet no longer due, or to be required. In relation whereto, it is aptly called a blotting out the Transgression; and not remembering of Sins; as Men use to do in releasing one another from due Debts. For a like reason it is also called a taking away all Iniquity; A casting Sins behind the Back; A passing by Transgressions; and a casting Sin into the Depths of the Sea: And agreeably in our Text, is explained by a Covering of Sin, and not imputing it; unto whom God imputeth Righteousness (as before the*

Hof. 14 2.
Isa. 38. 17.
Mic 7. 18.
19.

the Text it is interpreted) All which Expressions plainly denote this one and the same Thing, wherein consisteth the Act of *Forgiveness* that frees the Sinner from the Obligation of Suffering what the Commission of his Sin exposed him to. Concerning which is also to be Considered,

1. *The Authority and Power whereby this may be effected*, belonging only to him, who had the Power of imposing Laws, so as to exact Obedience, upon a severe Penalty; He being able to remit of what he had Power to exact, and none but He, against whom the Offence is committed. *Who can forgive Sins but God alone?* Even the Blind Scribes and Pharisees had sight enough to Reason out this Truth, that only God, against whom only Sin is committed, and to whom the Debt of Undergoing its Punishment is contracted, could Primarily and properly Pardon Sin. This being a Divine Prerogative, and as such proclaimed by God himself, speaking by his Prophet, *I, even I am he that blot out thy Transgressions for mine own sake; and will not remember thy Sins.* *The Authority from which it proceeds.* Luc. 1. 21.

2. *The Reason, or Moving Cause of this Divine Favour towards Sinners*, is only the Merit of Christ's Death; who thereby satisfied God's Justice for them; which by God is graciously accounted to them, as if they themselves had done it. *By whose Stripes, we are therefore said to be healed; in whom we have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the forgiveness of Sins.* For as all Things by the Law were purged with Blood, and without Shedding of Blood there is no Remission; therefore, agreeable to those Typical Institutions, are we taught that Christ came in the end of the World, appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself. And that in *moving Cause.* 1 Pet. 2. 24. Col. 1. 14. Heb. 9. 11. — v. 19. Christ

Eph. 1. 7. *Christ we have Redemption thro his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace: Even the Blood of Christ, provided by God himself in free Mercy and Compassion towards Sinners, reconciling an Offended, and satisfying a Just Deity, as the only Means by which God was disposed to grant this Blessing to the Church, even the Forgiveness of Sins.*

Its extent. 3. *The Sins to which this Act of Grace extends, being express'd (as in the Text and Creed, so generally wherever else this Matter is treated of Indefinitely, equally means all Sins not to be limited to any sort or sorts thereof, unless what the Gospel excepts which doth promise it. And therefore it is our Belief concerning this Article,*
 1. *That God, thro Christ, doth of his Grace, remit not only Lighter Provocations, but also Great and Many Sins: No aggravation rendring any Sin Unpardonable, but what renders the Condition of Pardon impossible. Upon which Account alone it is, that the Sin against the Holy Ghost, and wilful Apostacy from the Faith of Christ is excepted therefrom. So that no Penitent Sinner ought to Despair of Mercy. More especially, since further,*
 2. *Even Repeated Follies, and Relapsed Sinners are Pardonable; contrary to the Novatian Heresy, acknowledging but one Repentance available, even in Baptism, after which if any wilfully sinned there was no Mercy remaining for him. Upon which Account that Sacrament was oft deferred as long as there remained any Hopes of Life, that Death might prevent any such Sin. But God's Mercy is hereby restrain'd and dishonoured, whereby he seeks only the Good of his Creatures, and designs to leave always room for Pardon to the Penitent. And therefore are we Taught in*
 the

the Lord's Prayer to ask daily the *Forgiveness* of our *Trespases*, as being supposed what may daily be obtained. And it is made our Duty, as often as our Brother offends against us and Repents, so often to forgive him; intending to assure us of God's readiness always to forgive us, as oft as we return to him, who cannot possibly be out-done by us in Mercy, the most glorious of his Attributes. And therefore we also add, that, 3. *God's Pardon of Sin is Full and Absolute*; Who retains no old Grudge, no concealed Spite, never rips up the old Quarrel, Upbraids not with former Affronts and Follies, Repents not of his easiness to be reconciled; Retracts not, neither revokes arbitrarily his Kindness; Clogs it not with unreasonable Conditions, nor finds out subtle Evasions afterwards; But as he Pardons all, so he Pardons altogether; from which he will never depart, unless the Sinner depart from his Repentance, and reassume the Cause of the Quarrel, whereby alone he can exclude himself from Pardon.

4. *The Punishments* remitted hereby, are therefore such as Sin obligeth to: Even the *Eternal Miseries* of a Damned State in the other World, which are totally taken off when the Sinner is Pardoned; And *Temporal Inflictions* in the present Life, which are yet oft reserved; because not only consistent with, but convenient for a Pardoned State; whereby God doth manifest the Justice of his Providence, and Vindicate the Credit of his Laws, and wholsomely Correct to prevent the Forfeitures of his Pardon. Upon which account *David*, when forgiven his Sin, was doom'd to be Punish'd. And the best Men meet with the most Afflictions. And all Men are sub-

The Punishments remitted

2 Sam 12
13.

Rom 6. 23. *ject to Death which is the Wages of Sin. And whom*
 Rev. 3. 19. *the Lord Loveth, he therefore rebuketh and chastens.*
 1 Cor. 11. 32. *And when we are thus judged, we are chastened of the*
Lord, that we should not be condemned of the World.
 And 'tis a sufficient Blessing to be delivered from
 Eternal Damnation, thro whatever Chastisements
 for the present.

The Terms. 5. *The Terms and Condition upon which this is at-*
tainable, are Faith and Repentance; whereby the
Merit of Christ's Satisfaction hath derived to us a
Capacity, and without which there remains no
Possibility of Pardon. For the end of Christ's
coming was to call Sinners to repentance; who gave
 Mat. 9. 13. *himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniqui-*
 Tit. 2. 14 *ty, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of*
Good Works. He having done so much for us that
Repentance might not be in Vain, and doing no
more that it might not be Needless. Whereupon
our Actual Pardon and Compleat Reconciliation
with God is expressly suspended upon such Condi-
tion. And we believe the Forgiveness of Sins not as
already actually Pardon'd, but only as made Par-
donable by the Satisfaction of Christ upon our
Repentance. There is a two fold Degree there-
fore of our Reconciliation with God. The
First previons to our Repentance, which is whol-
ly preventive of any thing we can do, Absolute
and Inconditionate, wherein we are purely Pas-
sive; being latirely the Work of our Redeemer,
rendering Sin only Remissible: The latter subse-
quent thereof, being grounded thereon, and sus-
pended on the Performance of Conditions; where-
in we are to be Active, rendering Sin Pardon'd to
us, and compleating our Reconciliation with
God.

6. *The Instruments of Conveying and Applying this* *The Instru-*
 Act of Grace to us, are certain outward Signs *ments of*
 and Tokens of Gods own Institution, for the Pre- *conveying*
 sent Assurance and Comfort of such Penitent Be- *it.*
 lievers, both in the Sacraments, and in *Sacerdotal*
Absolution.

1. *The Sacraments* relate either to our *Initiation Sacra-*
 or *Continuation* in the Church; whereby *Remission* *ments.*
of Sins is dispens'd, upon *Repentance*, before Men
 are made Members thereof, by *Baptism*; the Wa-
 ter whereof washeth off the Stains of all former
 Sins, and puts them into a State of Grace and Fa-
 vour with God. St Peter therefore says to the *Act. 2. 38.*
Jews, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the
Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins; And
Ananias to St. Paul, Arise, and be baptised, and wash *—22. 16.*
away thy Sins, calling on the Name of the Lord. To
 which only *Forgiveness* is Absolutely promised, as
 the peculiar Grace of the Gospel; whereby *Jew-*
ish and *Heathen* Converts, however Wicked they
 had been, were received to Mercy, and cleansed
 from all their former Pollutions in this *Laver of* *Tit. 3. 5.*
Regeneration, whenever they renounced their for-
 mer Infidelity and Wicked Practices, and believ-
 ed in Christ, and entred into Covenant with him
 by *Baptism*. Insomuch that if such dyed before
 Commission of any new Sin after they were Bapti-
 sed, the Remission of their past Sins in *Baptism*, be-
 ing received with a sincere Repentance and sted-
 fast Faith in Christ, was sure to save them, tho they
 had not time to bring forth the *Fruits of Repen-*
tance in an Holy Life. But for those Men who
 have relapsed into the Commission of New Sins,
 after they have washed away all their Old Sins in
Baptism, *Remission* upon their *Repentance* then is
 dispens'd to them in the other Sacrament of the

Mat. 26,
28.

Lord's Supper; wherein they are admitted to renew the same Covenant of Grace again, and Seal the Pardon of even their new contracted Guilt upon their Actual forsaking of Sin, and amendment of their Lives. Herein *Christ* giveth his own Blood, which was shed for the Remission of Sins; and entertaineth all worthy Comers at his own Table; which is an open Profession that he is reconciled to them, and receives them again as Friends; and whereto therefore all baptised Christians, when they are startled and terrified with the Conscience of their Sins, ought to repair, with Faith and Repentance, to Seal and Assure the *Forgiveness* of them. To promote and ascertain which, there is moreover (as was said,)

Sacerdotal
Absolution.

Jo. 10. 22.
23.

2. *Sacerdotal Absolution*; wherein *Christ* hath authorized his *Ministers* acting in his stead to Pronounce the Sentence of Pardon upon all true Penitents, and bid them expect, that what they regularly thus declare on Earth, shall be confirm'd in his Sovereign Court in Heaven. He breathed on them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose-soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; And whose-soever Sins ye retain, they are retained, Which was no Personal Priviledge dying with the *Apostles*, nor yet restrained to any one of them above the rest; but was the *Power of the Keys* (as 'tis usually called) given to all the *Apostles* and their Successors; By Virtue whereof *St. Peter* absolved the Penitent Jews, *St. Paul* the Submissive *Corinthians*, and *St. John* is thought to apply it to all *Ministers*; By whom its frequent Use for the Three First Centuries is very apparent; and which, for the Comfort of Dejected Souls, is modestly prescribed in our Church, whereby if Men are not greatly advantaged, it ought not to be imputed to

Act. 2. 38.
1 Cor. 7. 10
1 Jo. 3. 16.

to the want of Right in the Priest; but only to the want of Penitence in the Party that received it; wherein, if the Minister judgeth to the best of his Skill, he doth his Duty; and God may be supposed sooner to forgive a true Penitent; when his Commissioned Servant hath declared from him the Word of *Reconciliation committed to his Ministry*. 2 Cor. 5 18.

7. *The Place appropriated to such Dispensation of this Grace is the Church of Christ; Which in some Measure seems to have been determin'd by our Creed it self; even by the relation this Article is observed formerly to have had with the Precedent. For some Ages it immediately followed the Belief of the Holy Church; and some Creeds express it, I believe the remission of Sins by the Church, where only it is enjoy'd in the most compleat and Perfect Manner. It disposes for it, by instilling Faith and Repentance, which are Gospel Graces, into us. It Declares it, by necessary Instruction. It Recommends it by wholesome Exhortations. It begs it by earnest Prayer; and Dispenses it in God's own Ordinances to us. Whence the Gospel (which is the Statute Law of the Church) answers the import of its Name, containing these Good Tidings, of great Joy to all People, which were so rarely known and little understood before the Promulgation of this Word of Grace. For which Zachariah in his Prophetical Hymn therefore, praising God, calls it, The giving Knowledge of Salvation unto his People, by Remission of their Sins. Thro the tender Mercy of our God; whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us.* Lu. 2. 10. 1. 77, 78

8. *The Time of obtaining this is, as to its Grant, limited to the Term of this present Life; But, as to our full Possession of it, it is deferred to our removing it.* The Time of obtaining it.

into the next Life. The Grace of the Gospel is confined to the Church on Earth; Whither Christ came to make the proffer of Pardon; where he made the Offering once up of himself to procure it for the Sins of the World; whence he carried his own Blood into the Holy of Holies to make Expiation in Heaven for the Sins committed on Earth; To which the great Gospel Terms of Pardon, Faith in Christ and Repentance from dead Works, are restrained, and can only be exercised while we have this World to overcome, and the Flesh to subdue to the Spirit thereby, before the day of Grace be over, and while the Long-Suffering of God is to us word, who is not Willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance. Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, to day if he will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts, Now being the accepted time, and Day of Salvation, when Terms of Reconciliation with God may be had, and Faith will avail to purify the Heart, and Repentance to Reform the Life, which hereafter can only serve to make us Tremble and Despair, because then ceasing to be any longer the Condition of Pardon. So that he that goes out of this World with his Sins Unpardoned hath lost his Opportunity, and becomes thenceforth incapable of a Pardon for ever. And therefore this Life is the only time to sue out our Pardon in, while our Reprieve lasts, and before Execution be inflicted: To which our Title must be made out here, tho not to be made fully Good to us till hereafter. For as this Life is the only Time of Tryal for Eternity, so it is the whole Term of Life that is to try us; and therefore our Work ending with our Life, our Wages will not be paid till this Life is ended, and our work done. So that should we leave off before, our Reward would

2 Pet. 3. 9,

Heb. 3. 7, 8.

2 Cor. 6. 2.

would be lost, and Pardon forfeited; because what comes last, undoes what went before; and Judgment will pass upon Men as it then finds them; the Conclusion of whose Life must determine their future State. And therefore, if after their Pardon, Men fall off, and relapse into the same Wickedness, they are declared to be again Unpardoned, and to stand accountable for all their former Transgressions. Is being the express Word of God himself by his Prophet Ezekiel, that when the Righteous turn- Eze. 18. 24.
~~eth away from his Righteousness and committeth Iniquity, and doeth according to all the Abominations that the Wicked Man doth, shall he live? all his Righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his Transgressions, that he hath trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.~~
 And yet more plainly, This Righteousness of the Righteous, says he, shall not deliver him in the Day of his Transgression. And when I shall say to the Righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, all his Righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his Iniquity, that he hath committed, he shall die for it. And accordingly our Saviour, in his Parable of the King making account of his Servants, represents him cancelling the Pardon he had given to one of them, that owed him great Sums, upon his mercilefs Usage of a small Debtor among his Fellow Servants, thereby rendering himself unworthy the continuance of that Grace. And he adds, so likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you. The Final Judgment of God respecting not so much what Men have been, as what they are; Inasmuch that as the Righteous will not be condemned for having been Wicked, so neither shall the Wicked be saved for having

33. 12, 13.

Mat. 18.
24. &c.

having been *Righteous*: But if the Wicked turn from his Wickedness and becomes a Righteous Man, and so continues, God will Pardon all his past Wickedness; And if the Righteous fall away from his Righteousness, and becomes a Wicked Man, and continues so, God will not regard all his past Righteousness to save him; wherein, only while we persevere, being therefore in a salvable State, the determination thereof must necessarily be suspended until the Time of our Tryal is over.

Such then being the *Nature* of this Doctrine we believe of the *forgiveness* of Sins; Proceed we,

*Its Blessed-
ness.*

II. To consider the *Blessedness* thereof, which our Text expresses and Creed supposes; In the one it being rank'd among our Church Privileges, and by the other pronounced *Blessed*. And that it is a *Blessing* is as certain and manifest as that Sin is an Evil; which *Blessing* consisting in a Discharge, implies Negatively, a freedom from the Evil of Guilt and Punishment; and Positively, the Enjoyment of the Benefit of Innocence and Salvation. Which is a *Blessing* all *Need*, which nothing can recompence the *Want* of, which every one will *Desire* and *Wish* for, which is the only *sufficiency* of it self, and which therefore obliges us to a suitable *Belief* and *Usage* of it.

*All need
Pardon.*

I. *All need Pardon*, as all are Offenders: Guilt being our Natural State (as fallen Creatures) and Punishment our Portion. For we bring Sin with us into the World, and till we are *forgiven* continue thereby in a State of Misery and Perdition, from which there is no other Discharge. For there are but two Fates that attend all Men living; and that is, finally, either *Damnation* or

Sal-

Salvation. And whether of these shall be our Lot, depends intirely upon our *Forgiveness* before we leave this uncertain State of our present Reprieve: So that as they who are *Unpardoned* here, must inevitably be *Miserable*, so they who have their *Sins forgiven* them are the only *Blessed*. And therefore all have as much need to be solicitous to obtain their Pardon to be saved, as they generally desire and hope not to be Damned: There being no *Medium* between remaining Guilt and abiding Misery, nor no Reprieve after this Life to the Unpardoned from Execution, nor any thing to stand us in stead but *Forgiveness*. And therefore,

2. *Nothing can Recompence the Want of this.* For what can be Enjoyment to a damned Creature? Or what can be Equivalent to a Discharge from the Misery imported thereby, which entitles in the Favour of God at present, and entitles to the Inheritance of an eternal weight of Glory hereafter? Our Saviour's Question is a full Decision of this Point; *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?* Rightly supposing, that if the Gain of the whole World cannot make up the Loss, no Price can be equivalent to the Salvation of a Soul. Indeed, for a Present Enjoyment, there is a deal of Temptation in the World to seduce us. But, alafs, we are not Creatures only of the Present, but have begun a Life that will never end; and if we are not provided for Futurity as well as the Present, no Enjoyment can recompence for the succeeding Misery. For the Present will soon be over, and when it is past we shall be never the better for what Provision was made only for it; But

Futu-

Futurity will always be a coming, and will never suffer us to see through the Misery we have made no Provision against; and then we shall be unprovided for, having mis'd of our Pardon for ever; and shall be able to meet with no Equivalent to Everlasting Salvation, which hath no other thing like it, that can supply its want, or make any proportion of amends for such its loss. And therefore as nothing ought to be regarded by us like it, so ought we not to neglect it for any thing, because nothing can suffice us without it. And therefore also,

Every one
will desire
it.

3. *This is what every one will Desire and Wish for one time or other; as what is most Desirable in it self, and what Necessity will make sensible of. For tho the present Diversions of a Prosperous State may stifle such Apprehensions, and vitiate such Appetite for a while, yet as Men retire thence, and make nearer Approaches to their Doom, their sollicitousness will recur; and when the Reprieve is expired, and Execution call'd for, and Damnation felt, then, if not before, Men will begin too late to be sensible of the Need they have to be forgiven. Few or none of Criminals are ever so hardned as to Renounce, tho most are generally so besotted as to Neglect their Pardon. It is, usually, the Desire of all, tho the Endeavours of few. Men will hope for Mercy, even while they are *treasuring up* to themselves *Wrath*. And yet there is but little difference in the Issue between the one and the other: Both he that *Renounceth*, and he that *Neglects*, being alike sure to go Unpardoned. And therefore what Men dare not Renounce, 'tis Unreasonable to Neglect; Because to miss thereof in whatever*

man-

manner, or by whatever Means, is alike their Undoing. And what Men will be sure to wish for and desire, it is both Prudence and Interest to secure by probable Endeavours, because never to be obtained only by Wishing, nor Wishes quieted but by Fruition, the Satisfaction whereof recommends the Blessing. Especially, since also,

4. *This is the only Sufficiency of it self that will make up all other Wants, and secure to us a Blessing in all our other Enjoyments.* For as only Sin hurts, so where that is pardon'd nothing can hurt; which is as much as Man needs, or can desire to make him happy, which nothing but the hurt of Sin prevents or interrupts. For if Sin be forgiven, and Peace made with God and Conscience, and Heaven secured; what can be wanting? therein is every thing to Content and Rejoyce us. We are wont to count none more miserable than a Condemn'd Criminal; And such usually counts none more happy than himself when he receives his Pardon; the weightiness of which makes all other Concerns seem light. So that if we can but be saved, we shall need no more. Neither would the having of never so many other Enjoyments any more add to make us happy in it, than our being never so destitute of all the Comforts of this Life will be able to diminish the Blessing of it to us. For only this is the Ultimate Happiness of Man; that answers the End and Design of our being here, for which we have our Time and Means, and Capacities given; And therefore in securing this we do our Business at once both for this Life and for ever. Other things are no otherwise really valuable than as they tend to promote this; But this is valuable for it self; and is equivalent to all we can desire or have, because

cause it is all we necessarily want, and will abundantly make up to us every thing we have miss'd of, and swallow up the Remembrance of all our Troubles and Sorrows in endless and boundless Joys and Felicity. Finally therefore,

*Obligation
to a suitable
Belief.*

5. *This obliges to a suitable Belief and Usage hereof, as an Object of Hope, as well as Faith; Entertaining and Applying the Blessing of it to our selves, in our ready submission to the Influence it hath of Confuting some pernicious Errors, Teaching some particular Duties, Exhorting to Good Life, Examining the Security of our Conditions, Directing to the best Means of Preservation, and Warning against our only Dangers; whereby alone we may be Blessed in the Forgiveness of Sins.*

*Errors con-
futed.*

1. *The Errors hence confutable are those of,*

1. *The Antimonians asserting Remission of Sin, or Justification to be from Eternity; And teaching that the Elect are actually Pardoned at the Death of Christ, so as whatever Sins such commit they are forgiven beforehand. Which supposing a Discharge from an Obligation before it be contracted, implies a Contradiction. And extending Free Grace beyond the Divine Intention, destroys the Conditionality of Pardon consistent therewith. The Errors also of,*

2. *The Papists both Denying and Disgracing this Christian Priviledge and Blessing, are hereby confutable, while they allow not the whole Obligation to Punishment for Sin, to be taken off by God's Pardon, without Expiation thereof in their invented, mercenary Purgatory; and arrogantly affix its Dispensation to their own Pontiff, or those only Authorised by him; prostituting it for Money, and politickly managing it to advance the Priests in estimation with the Common People, and to*

†

give

give them Opportunity, by their *Auricular Confessions* required, to pry into the Secrets of all Persons. And finally, the Error of,

3. *The Rigid Calvinists*, is hence also to receive its Confutation, asserting a necessity of believing the actual Pardon of our own Particular and Personal Sins. Which is beside the import of this *Article* (that only teaches Sin to be Pardonable) and is no matter of God's Revelation to us; about which Men are very apt to be deceived; and which usually tends towards the most perplexing and discouraging Consequences.

2. *The Duties more particularly hence Taught*, are

*Duties
Taught.*

1. *Hearty Thankfulness* distinctly due from us to every Person in the *Blessed Trinity*, contributing to our *Blessedness* herein. God the *Father* receding from his own Right in compliance with our Necessity; remitting the Obligation to Punishment incurr'd, and becoming exorable to us, while Angels that are Creatures of higher rank remain yet unpardonable in their Guilt. God the *Son* becoming our Surety to purchase this Grace for us, by satisfying for our Sins, tho by the greatest Debasement of himself. And God the *Holy Ghost* Sanctifying our Natures, whereby to capacitate us to receive the same. The whole Divinity Manifesting the greatest Clemency no less in *Forgiving Sins*, than in giving any other Benefits; for which *Good will towards Man*, *Glory* is due from us to God in the highest. And,

2. *Ardent Love*, answerable to that which disposed to such Kindness; Nothing being more natural than for them to love most, to whom most is forgiven: And this God will have expressed by us,

3. For

3. *Forgiving one anothers Injuries*; God's *Forgiveness* and *Ours* ever going together; Depending each on other: *His* preceding to encourage *ours*; and *ours* immediately following in order to secure *His*; being both joyned in the same Petition to engage our regard to the necessary Influence God's *Mercy on us* hath to beget bowels of Compassion and *Mercy in us*, and the Power such *Mercy in us* has to pronounce God's *Mercy upon us*, who will *Mat. 6. 12. forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors,* and *Lu. 6. 36. who will have us Merciful, as he our Father in Heaven is Merciful.* And hence therefore we further learn our Duty of,

4. *Hope*, As ballanc'd between its two Extremes of *Despair* and *Presumption*. None being necessitated to despair, because there is *Forgiveness of Sins*; Nor any encouraged to Presume, because that only can be had upon our forsaking our Sins, and reforming our Lives. God being, as too Merciful to Punish the truly Penitent, so too Just to Pardon the Wicked Transgressor. And therefore, finally, this, is a particular Obligation to,

5. *Universal Obedience*; affording Encouragement to do any thing for God, in return to such Mercy, and discountenancing Disobedience to him, by adding to its aggravation, from our Abuse thereof.

6. *The Exhortation*, then, hence is to a Good Life, that may capacitate us for and secure to us this Great Privilege and Blessing proffer'd us. And tho' Arguments seem needless to persuade a Condemn'd Criminal to accept his Pardon; yet so it is, God offers and intreats, what necessity Urges, and yet it is generally neglected for Trifles and Vanities. If we believe Sin Pardonable and

Exhortation
to a Good
Life.

and know that we are Sinners, and that nothing but Pardon can save us; Nothing can Apologize for our Neglect thereof, which protracts our Danger, and delays our Happiness. O let us therefore be so kind and just to our selves as to Accept the present Offer that may now so easily and certainly be obtained on Good Terms! which will not much longer be made us on any Terms; which none ever miss'd that do not even yet continue dearly to repent it; who would be glad of the Opportunity we value not for it; which once past, is lost for ever; not to be made sure of too soon; and therefore *To day*, even with the latest, *while it is called to day*, it concerns us to *seek after*, what we have already too long and too much neglected; and what, had we been wiser, we would much sooner and more surely have secured, even the things which belong so much to our Peace, the Blessing of having our Sins forgiven us!

4. *The Examination of our State* in respect where-
to, is therefore what such our *Belief* naturally fur-
ther tends to, in order to discover the *Blessedness*
of it. It so much concerns us that our Condi-
tion should be *Blessed*, since we profess to believe
that hereby it may be so, and is only to be judged
to be so, as our Sins stand cancell'd with God in
our own Consciences, whereof none can be too
well informed, as being of too great Moment to be
left to the uncertainty of any Adventure. Con-
sider we, therefore, oft and seriously what we
have done, or what we have yet to do to be *Bles-*
sed; What Means and Industry we have made
use of to procure our Pardon, and what Success
we have had thereby? What the Aspect of our
Sins is; and what the Inclination of our Hearts

*Examina-
tion of our
State.*

towards them? These being Questions that concern every one to be well resolved in, by putting them home to themselves, and being therein true and impartial to their own Interest; till with great Comfort and well grounded Hope they may be able thence to collect the *Blessedness* of their State in the *Forgiveness* of their *Sins*. For which end,

*Direction
offered.*

5. *The Direction*, hence offered, is a sincere and timely Compliance with the Terms and Condition hereof; without which *Sin* is not *Pardonable*, nor *Blessedness* attainable; whereby God hath graciously discovered to us, (what otherwise could never have been known) by what Performances he will be satisfied for the Wrongs and Affronts we have put upon him, (to which no Satisfaction, that of our selves we can make, can be equivalent,) and whereby we may be enabled to take such a safe and right Method, as will effectually lead and place us in this *Blessed State* of *Pardon*. Seeking it only by true Faith, sincere Repentance, a Constant and Universally Holy, Righteous and Sober Life, without which all Endeavours and Expectations to be *Forgiven* will prove Fraudulent and Insufficient. And he that thinketh all this too much, must look for his *Pardon* some other way than from the Mercy of God in Christ, who never *Pardons* on other Terms that we know of; And he that makes other, must *Pardon* himself thereon if he can; since God will not be tyed to the Laws of Sinners. To Conclude,

*Warning
Given.*

6. *The Warning given* hence, against all our Danger is, that being once Pardon'd, upon the true Performance of God's own Terms, we beware of so presuming thereupon, as to indulge our selves in any future known Sin; But rather take the more heed of incurring new Guilt, and
ex-

excluding our selves again from an Happiness so lately and hardly obtained by us. And this is our *Saviour's* own Caution; *Now thou art made whole, Sin no more, lest a worse Thing happen unto thee.* For God doth not (whatever others most unreasonably pretend to) dispenſe his Pardons for the Sins of many Years to come. Upon our true Repentance he pardons all that is past; but if we (through our Carelessness and Corruption) fall away therefrom; then his Wrath returns with our Guilt, and we stand afresh liable to Punishment. And therefore, as every day we all certainly Sin and contract new Guilt, so every day we stand in need of a New Pardon; and are taught as constantly to beg it, as we do our *Daily Bread*; and must never think our Concern for it over, till our possibility of Offending is over with our present Lives. And therefore since we cannot live Innocently, it behoves us to live Penitently; Every day renewing our Pardon while our Reprieve is lengthened, that Judgment may not surprise us, without it in a readiness about us.

Such is the Import and Improvement of our Belief of this Blessed Priviledge, granted by God the *Father*, purchased by God the *Son*, and whereto we are disposed by God the *Holy Ghost*, in the *Holy Catholick Church*, among the *Saints in Communion*. Which when therefore, we profess to Believe, we thus mean, in its full Sense, viz. I Believe that as Sin transgresseth the Law of God, so it incurs a Guilt that bindeth over to Punishment; that God only can remit; Who, thro the Merit of *Christ's* Satisfaction hath Covenanted, upon our Faith and Repentance to dispense this Grace for all past Sins; whereof a present Assurance is administer'd in the due Adminis-

ministration of his Holy Sacraments, and solemn Declaration of his Intention pronounced by Commission from himself in sacerdotal Absolution, in his own Church; wherein it always may be had, and to which our Title being made out here, it will be fully made Good to us hereafter: Which I esteem as a Blessing all need, which nothing can recompence the want of, which every one will desire and wish for, which is the only Sufficiency of it self, and which therefore obliges to a suitable Submission to the Influence it hath of Securing from Errors, teaching Duties, exhorting to Good Life, examining our Security, Directing to our Preservation, and Warning against our Danger; and in this Sense, and to this purpose, I desire and endeavour to Believe the Forgiveness of Sins. And thus therefore pray we,

24th Sund.
after Tri-
nity.

O Lord, we beseech thee, absolve thy People from their Offences; that through thy bountiful Goodness we may all be delivered from the Bands of those Sins, which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour! Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XIX.

ON THE Eleventh Article

OF THE APOSTLES CREED.

Acts. xxiv. 15.

-----*There shall be a Resurrection of the Dead,
both of the Just and Unjust.*

THese Words are Part of that most admirable Apology which St. Paul made in his own Defence before the Governor Felix; Asserting that Part of his Creed, which we most justly profess in the Eleventh Article of ours concerning the Resurrection of the Body; which is the Fourth Christian Priviledge the Holy Ghost, by Sanctifying doth capacitate us for the Blessing of. The Explanation, Confirmation and Improvement of which Doctrine is the proposed Argument of this Discourse; whereby we may understand what it is we are herein

required to believe, the Ground of such our Belief, and the useful Consequences thereof.

The Resurrection implies,

I. *To explain the Doctrine of the Resurrection*, in order to understand what it is we are herein required to believe, according to that Representation the *Scriptures* give of it, in its proper and literal meaning, I shall consider it, as what it is intended to be, the *Recovery from the State of Natural Death*, and consequently implying these Three Things. 1. *A re-imbodiment of Departed Souls.* 2. *A revivification of the same Dead Bodies whence they departed.* And, 3. *An Immortal Life in this Reunion hence resulting.*

A Re-imbodiment of Departed Souls.

1. *The Resurrection implies a Re-imbodiment of Departed Souls.* It respecting us as Men; to restore that Humane Life which Death deprives us of. And therefore in the *Text* it is called a *Resurrection of the Dead*, which tho our *Creed* refers only to the *Body* expressly, yet is to be understood of the *Man*; who while his *Soul* is separated from the *Body*, is in a state of *Death*, tho he yet lives; being a *Dead Man*, tho a *Living Ghost*. For Human Life consists in the Union of *Soul* and *Body*; which is lost by their Separation; and only therefore recoverable by a Re-Union. And therefore tho an Immortal Spirit cannot Die, yet it ceases to live the Life it lost by Death, as soon as it is separated from the *Body*; to which it must be restored if ever the *Man* live again. For the *Resurrection of the Body*, is not that of the *Dead*, unless the same *Soul* that departed from it be again United to it; the Restoration whereof being the Revivification of the *Body*, wherein the *Man* visibly Lives, therefore is his *Resurrection* properly referred to his *Body*, tho his *Soul* also no less necessarily

farily be supposed to *Rise from the Dead*. For the *Body* to live, being inspirited with another Soul, would not be a Recovery of the Life which Death deprived of, nor of the same Man that dyed; But a Creation rather of a New Life, and another Man; whose Living Soul without a Body is as much in a State of Death, as his Dead Body is, while deprived of the Soul, in a State of Corruption. And therefore the *Resurrection of the Dead*, implies a restoring the Soul from its State of Separation to which Death forced it, but shall not always hold it, to its ancient way of subsisting in a Body. And,

2. *This also supposes a Revivification of the same Dead Body whence the Soul before had departed by Death*; *A Revivification of the same Dead Bodies.*
 For a Soul united to another Body, tho it might thereby be said to live an Humane Life, yet it is neither that Life it lost by Death, nor yet the same Man that dyed. For the Body, tho an Inferiour yet, is as much a Constituent Part of Man as the Soul; who is compounded of both; and is no longer a Man than while both are in Union. And tho, in the State of Separation, only the Body Corrupts; yet, in the Resurrection, that utmost Corruption will be no hindrance to its Restoration; which however puzzled with Difficulties to Apprehend in what manner, is yet plainly Revealed, that it assuredly is certain to be so. For when we shall appear before the Judgment Seat of *Christ*, we are told, it shall be in our Body; even that wherein we performed the Actions for which we shall be Judged; from which the Soul departed at Death, what ever Corruption may have since been undergone thereby. And this we have exemplified in all that ever have yet been raised from the Dead, who all inspirited the very
 B b 4 same

same Particular Bodies they had died out of. Not
 only our Saviour, whose Body never saw corruption,
 rose with the same wounded Flesh he was
 Crucified in; But those Saints who are said to
 have risen at the same time with him, and whose
 Bodies probably had been Corrupted in their
 Graves, no doubt rose in their own Bodies that
 they dyed out of, and that were buried; it being
 said that the Graves were opened, and many Bodies of
 Saints which Slept arose; and came out of the Graves.
 But whether they had seen Corruption or no;
 Yet since both our Saviour and they were restored
 after Death to their former Bodies; and since
 others that have been translated, and that Gene-
 ration that shall be found in their own Bodies at
 Christ's coming to judgment, never part with
 their Bodies at all; it necessarily follows that
 Corruption can have no effect to deprive the Soul
 of its own Proper Body in the Resurrection that ad-
 mits of no disparity in Substance, whereof all are
 alike Partakers. Therefore St. Paul informs us
 that this corruptible must put on Incorruption, and
 this Mortal must put on Immortality; than which,
 Words cannot express more plainly the Identity
 of the Body that must rise; In which Sence, all
 that ever professed to believe the Resurrection, have
 always expressed their Belief. Thus Job says,
 who after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my
 Flesh (even in that Flesh destroyed with the Body
 by Worms) shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my
 self, and mine Eyes shall behold and not another. And
 Daniel tells us, that many of them that Sleep in the
 Dust of the Earth shall awake; And our Lord him-
 self, that the Hour is coming in the which all that
 are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come
 forth; And that in this Sence it hath ever been
 received

Mat. 27.

52.

1 Thes. 4.

17.

1 Cor. 15.

53.

Job 19.

26, 27.

Dan. 12. 2.

Jo. 5. 28.

received in the Church, seems *manifest* from the great Care and Expence that *Christians* bestowed on the Funerals of their Dead Bodies; Which their Enemies understood to intend the declaration of their Belief of the *Resurrection* thereof to Life again, as is no less evident, by their vain Endeavours to perplex its Possibility, thro Transmigration and Dispersion of Matter, barbarously causing the Dead Bodies of Saints to be devoured by Beasts, or reducing them to Ashes, and scattering them against the Wind, or in the Rivers.

And yet is it not to be believed that our Dead Bodies will ever Rise again, (tho the *same*) without any Alteration; since also we are taught that *1 Cor. 15. Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, as so* having Qualities proper to this present State, *neither doth Corruption inherit Incorruption.* And therefore it is the same Body Changed (for *we shall be Changed,*) and having qualities suitable to that Future State it is thenceforward to live in, — *v. 51.* that is then to Rise. For as the State will be Changed, so this Body must necessarily be changed too; which is suited only to a Corruptible State, wherein only it cannot live; and therefore, to live in another State, its *Substance* must receive other *Qualities*; Which the *Scriptures* reduce to these Four; viz. *Incorruptibility, Glory, Power, and Spirituality.*

1. What is *sown in Corruption will be raised in Incorruption.* — *v. 42.* The very same Body that is Buried and Corrupted, will not only be United in its Integral Parts, that by such its Corruption are dissolved; But by an Eternal Law, so Compacted as never more, by any Violence, Infection or Infirmary to be Corrupted. 2. What is *Sown in Dishonour will be raised in Glory.* — *v. 43.* The same Body that sell a Victim to the all Conquering Power of Death; being strip of all its Ornaments of Nature, and Hu-

Humbled under the Punishment of Disobedience; debased with the Mark of God's Displeasure, will be restored not only to the Primitive Lustre of its Innocent Nature, but also advanced to the Purchased Honours of its Redeemed Nature; where by its Losses in the *First Adam*, will be recompenced with Advantage in the *Second Adam*; and as we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly. And consequently our Bodies will be raised, that Humane Bodies never before were capable of; He, by whose Power we shall rise, *changing our Vile Bodies* [not only to the Perfection of Humane Earthy Bodies in a State of Innocence, but] *that they may be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all Things unto himself.* 3. *What is sown in Weakness, will be raised also in Power.* Even the same Body that runs thro a whole Course of Impotency; being maimed by Sin, Over-tired by the Service of an Active Soul, Worn down by Pains and Diseases, and finally Dissolved by Death; shall be raised Fresh and Vigorous, with an Ability to attend and serve the Improved Soul in its highest Operations and Desires, to bear the weight of an Eternal Glory, and to Exist beyond the reach of Inward Infirmities, or outward Dangers; When there will be no more Death, nor Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain, for the former Things will be passed away. Finally, 4. *What is sown a Natural Body, will be raised a Spiritual Body.* The same Body that is now only Dust animated, sustained by Natural and Ordinary Means, and subjected to Animal Affections and Operations, little differing in Way of Subsistence from the Bodies of other Living Creatures; will be then Refined and Improved

—v. 49.

Phil. 3. 21.

Rev. 21 4.

1 Cor. 15.
44.

proved above what Humane Nature now is by the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the Dead; Rom. 8. 11 quickening our Mortal Bodies. Inſomuch that in many Things the Body will Partake of the Perfections of a Spirit, and ſubſiſt after the manner thereof, above this Animal ſenſual Life, with no more dependance on natural Supports than if a pure Spirit, tho' yet Fleſh and Blood; they who ſhall be ac- Lu. 20. 34. counted worthy to obtain the Reſurrection from the Dead (as our Saviour hath taught) do neither Marry, nor are given Marriage, neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the Angels.

Such is the Revivification of the ſame Dead Bodies by the Reſurrection, reſtoring the Separated Soul to its own altered Body, whereby the ſame Man will Live again that once Dyed. And, Finally,

3. This alſo implies an Immortal Life hence reſult- ing; It being a Reſurrection from the Dead; as it Life Im- frees from the Poſſibility of Dying any more; mortal. the Soul and Body Re-Uniting never to ſeparate again; whereby Death is ſwallowed up in Victory, 1 Cor. 15. and this Corruptible muſt put on Incorruption, and 54, 55. this Mortal muſt put on Immortality, and there will be no more Death, but an immortal Soul ſhall then Rev. 21. 4. live in an immortal Body; which is the Life God deſigned Man for in his Creation, and the ſame that Adam ſhould have lived, had he not loſt it by the Fall; to which all will be reſtored by the Reſurrection. For a Mortal Life is not the Life of a Man, but only as he is conſidered under the No- tion of a Sinner. Who was made for Immorta- lity, and had never Dyed had he never Offended; And therefore when Man is reſtored to Life, it is to an Immortality, never to die again, for which an Immortal Principle was united to Corrupti- ble Matter at Firſt; ſeparable only upon Diſobe- dience

dience; and therefore for ever Inseparable when the Penalty of that is remitted in the *Resurrection*.

And in this Notion we are to believe the *Resurrection*, which as to its *Extent*, will be *General*; being in order to a *Judgment* that is so, where we *must all appear before the Tribunal of Christ*; even the *Dead Indefinitely*, both the *Just and Unjust*, comprehending all *Mortals*; none being exempted the Thing, tho only some are capacitated for the *Blessing* of it.

And this also, as to its *Time*, is yet for to come; *St. Paul* Professing in the *Text*, that there shall be a *Resurrection*: in Opposition to that *Heretic* which in his days began to shew it self, Affirming the *Resurrection* to be already past. Of which Opinion was *Hymeneus and Philetus*: who concerning the *Truth* are said to have erred, saying, that
 2 Tim. 2. 18. the *Resurrection* is already past; and overthrow the *Faith* of some. For to believe it already past, is to deny it; because it supposes such a *Sense* thereof as must destroy it. And so they who interpret this *Resurrection* of the *Likeness* only of *Christ's Resurrection*; that as he dyed again, so we should die unto *Sin*, and live again unto *Righteousness*; attributing all to the renovation of the *Mind*; must deny the *Resurrection* of the *Body*: Which was a *Doctrine* delivered at first to be believed as to come; which was not past in the *Apostles* days; nor is it yet to this *Day*; neither can it be till the *last Day*, at the end of the *World*, when the *Enmity* of *Death* will be spent, and *Mortality* swallowed up of *Life*, and *Christ* descend to *Judgment*, and all *Men* in their *Souls* and *Bodies* appear alive together, never to Die more by a *Second Dissolution*.

This

on, This is the Christian Doctrine of the Resurrection, professed to be believed by St. Paul in the *Scriptures*, and by Us in our Creed. Which, however *brave*, and that it is no less True, shall be evinced by our Endeavours,

II. To Confirm its Certainty; in order also to Understand the Ground and Reason of such our Belief of it: Being what the Text Asserts, *that there shall be*, and we reasonably conclude will be, from the Notices we have of its Possibility, Probability and Certainty; as what no Man can absolutely Deny, all may rationally expect, and we must firmly believe. For, even thus to Rise again is evidently,

The Truth and Certainty thereof.

I. A Thing Possible, not to be denied absolutely Possible, by any Man; because with God all Things are Possible; and to any other, this is not pretended to be ascribed. And if God cannot effect it, it must be either for want of Knowledge to know how; or want of Power to do what he knows; or through some Contradiction implied in the Thing which renders it impracticable, not to be done at all by any Skill or Power whatsoever. Whereas we believe God to be of Infinite Knowledge, for which no Difficulty can be too Intricate; whose Notice cannot be deceived or puzzled by any Subtilties in Division and Transmutation of Parts; which after all, being still somewhere, though we cannot imagin where, yet must necessarily be observed by the Eye of God which is every where; And wherever they are, they are therefore but where he would have, and hath ordered them to be; and whence he can order their return at his Pleasure; and therewith make Man to be what he was before, as easily as he at first made him to be Man. A Re-union being as Feasible as a Creation, and

to Repair being as easie as to Build; and what once has been, may as well be again, as ever it was made to be what before it was not. And therefore God can still make of the Dust returning from the Bodies of Men unto the Earth, Humane Bones and Flesh as well as of the Dust which first came from the Earth, which was as far from being Humane then, as any Ashes now, or Dust can be: And he that hath promised that he will do this, will take care that nothing shall ever render it *Impossible*; and hath already administer'd to us several Notices that it further is,

Probable.

2. *A Thing very Probable*; reasonably to be expected by exery Man, from the Consideration of the *Principles of Humanity*; the *Nature of those Actions* flowing thence; and the *Natural Course of Variations* every where visible in Nature. For the *Principles of Humanity* consists of are *Spirit* and *Flesh*; which, however different in themselves, have a natural Relation, Aptitude and Appetite to co-habit, and co-operate each with other, and a continued Unwillingness and Averseness ever to separate; which cannot intimate less than that they were primitively intended for a longer continuance together, without reasonably questioning the Creator for *Making all Men in vain*; than which nothing is more Unreasonable to suppose. And what *Goodness* ever designed, *Mercy* may probably restore, however *Justice* may interrupt; and Man may live a shorter space than many of his Inferiour Creatures in the Body at present, because he alone is to live again after Separation, by a Re-Union of his Principles. And the rather, because the *Actions* flowing thence are free, having the Nature of Good and Evil, and lyable to Rewards and Punishments; which not following

ing while the present Union lasts, wherein they were all performed; and being due to the Person in the Capacity wherein he acted, it is requisite that he be again restored to what he was, that he may be Remunerated or Punished for what he hath done; and that as both Soul and Body Communicated in the Action, so both may Communicate also in the Reward or Punishment such Action may have deserved. Even for which End tho they are separated never so soon or long, it appears highly probable, that one time or other, they will come together in Union again. Especially, since, Finally, hereof we may Observe Experiments, resembling, and representing this, so common in a Natural *Course of Variations*. The Day dying into Night, and Rising again the next Morning. The Summer dying into Winter, and Reviving again out of an Annual Spring. Even the Corn by which we Live, and for want whereof we die, dies and corrupts in the Earth, to Revive and Multiply it self. Our Bodies are fed with this constant Experiment, and we continue this Life by a Succession of Resurrections. Thus all Things are repaired by Corrupting, are preserved by Perishing, and revive by Dying. And can we think that Man, the Lord of all these Things, which thus die and revive for him, should be detained in Death never to live again? It not being imaginable that God should thus restore all things to Man, and not restore Man to himself. But as we are not, in Matters of Christian Faith, to rely only on Probabilities, so we may fix our Persuasion on this, as

3. Lastly, *A Thing infallibly Certain; Necessary to be Believed* however Difficult to be Apprehended by us; being *Revealed* as the determined Will of God, and *Confirmed* by the most undoubted

ed Testimonies. The full and open discovery of this Truth by *Revelation*, was indeed reserved as a Gospel Grace to the coming of the Messiah, who by conquering Death was to ascertain the Truth of a *Resurrection*. Yet, from the time that Man became Mortal, the Belief and Hopes of an Immortal Life hath ever been the Encouragement to Obedience, from the import and Design even of that Promise made to *Adam*, that the *Seed of the Woman* should break the *Serpent's Head*, assuring that the Devil should be dispossest'd of that Power he had gain'd over Humanity, and Man deliver'd from the Calamity of Mortality, that by the *Serpent's Subtilty* he was fallen into. Of which Faith it is very evident *Job* was, who says. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; And tho after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God.* And which the *Jews* themselves acknowledge to be express'd by the Prophet *Daniel*, foretelling that *Many of them that Sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to Everlasting Life, and some to Shame and Everlasting Confusion.* And which is so evidently the Doctrine of the Gospel, that in respect thereto, *Christ* is said thereby to have brought *Life and Immortality to Light*; not in regard only of the Immortality of the Soul, which was a Principle acknowledged and believed long before the Gospel was preached, But in regard especially to the indissoluble Re-Union of Body and Soul after Death by a *Resurrection*. Which he plainly taught, and was himself an Instance of; and therefore called himself *the Resurrection and the Life*, which was both his Purchase and Discovery. The Testimonies confirming the same, are the Divers Instances of Dead Persons restored to Life; In the

Old Testament of the Widows Son of *Sarepta*; the *Shumanite's* Child, and the Man buried in the Sepulcher of *Elisha*; In the *New*, of the Daughter of *Jairus*; the Young Man of *Nain*; *Lazarus* even after he had been Dead long enough to Corrupt; the many Bodies of *Saints*, for ought we know, long before Dissolved into Dust, which arose with our *Saviour*. And therefore especially the *Resurrection* of our Lord himself, who raised them, and himself in our Nature in a Way both of Example and Causality. So that what God hath revealed to be his Will (who can do what he pleaseth, and will do what he promises) we have some Instances of being already effected as his Deed, and an Earnest to assure in due time its Accomplishment, whereof Ac. 17. 31 he hath given an Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised Christ from the Dead; who rising to Judge the World, manifests the Certainty of the Worlds rising to be Judged; whereof he is the Head, related to all the Members, the First-Fruits of them which Sleep, their Fore-runner, and Captain of Life; in whom the whole Humane Race is already as much Assured to Rise again from Death, as Doomed to Die in Adam: Both equally in their Persons representing it. And therefore, as in Adam 1 Cor. 15. (says the Apostle) all Die, so in Christ shall all be made 22. Alive; Immortality being derived from the one, as Mortality is from the Other; And the Soul and Body separable by Death thro Adam's Transgression, being inseparably to be Re-United thro Christ's Satisfaction. Nature recovering the Life it lost; having now a Capacity to live an Immortal Life by the Resurrection of Christ, which had been forfeited by the Fall of Adam. So that the Resurrection is as assured to us as Death; both being upon equal Grounds derived to us from two se-

veral Persons equally interessed in and Representatives of our Nature; the one no more to be escaped by any, than the other. So confirm'd are the Grounds of our Belief of this Article from the Notices we have of the Possibility, Probability, and Certainty of the Doctrine it teaches. What remains now to be spoke to is,

The Improvement of this Doctrine.

III. Lastly, To Direct to the Improvement of this Doctrine in some of its most Obvious and Useful Consequences: which the Scripture very exprelly and Pathetically applies to these two Comprehensive Purposes, (beyond which we need not invent) of Consolation under Tribulation, and of Exhortation to Christian Duty.

1 Thes. 4. 18.

The Use of Consolation is what St. Paul directs the Thessalonians to; When after a Discourse to them of the Certainty and Circumstances of this General Resurrection, he admonisheth them to Comfort one another with these Words, in which he had deliver'd this Comfortable Doctrine to them; Plainly intimating that the Consideration of the Resurrection is to be the Christians Peculiar and Chief Support, to bear them up under all the Difficulties and Discouragements of the present Life.

Col. 3. 1, 2.

The other Use of Exhortation is what he urgeth the Colossians with, when, from his Supposition of their being Risen with Christ, he infers their Obligation of seeking those Things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God: and of setting their Affections on Things Above, not on Things on the Earth. No less plainly hereby also intimating, that the Resurrection is the Prime Motive of Christian Obedience, to Urge and Quick-en Men to such a Conversation as becometh the Gospel of Christ. The whole Design of our Belief of this Do-

Doctrine being to make our Life *Easie*, and to make our Life *Better*. Therefore

1. *The Consideration of the Resurrection is a Comfort Proper and Able to make a Christians Life in this World easy.* *The Christians Comfort.* Indeed, no search hath been more curiously pursued in all Ages, than after a Cure for Grief, a Remedy for Afflictions, and a Recompence for Troubles all Men (in some Degree or other) must endure while they live here: And several Methods have been directed to in the Case. Some have betook themselves to *Intemperance* and Sensual Diversions; proposing thereby to make themselves amends for the Evil they Suffer, or at least to stupify and harden themselves against its Impressions. And yet this hath never been able to remove all Sorrow, nor to hold out long; but doth frequently bring More and Worse Mischiefs with it; and in driving away Care, lets in Ruine, that renders the Remedy worse than the Disease, and makes it an hard Bargain, by changing Trouble for Vice, and Everlasting Happiness for a Moments merry Dream. Which the Wiser sort being apprehensive of, have therefore rather recommended *Business* as a good Diversion of Sorrow; while yet it is often by sad Experience found, that there are some Sorrows too fullen to be Immploy'd, and too importunate to be Diverted, which prove able absolutely to Command us to attend and bear them; in which Case there is no Remedy but *Patience*, which is yet no Cure in it self of a Present Evil, but only a prudent Defence against its increase by some future Evil. It neither Alleviating what Grief is actually felt, nor offering any Compensation for the feeling thereof; but what it deduces from a Belief of a Future State by *the Resurrection*; that is the only Equivalent for all

Afflictions: and was therefore revealed for the support of *Job*, as a particular Mercy to him, and General Instruction to us, that since that Man of Universal Tribulation had this Revelation given to support his Patience, there can be no Affliction to which the same Consolation may not be applied with all desirable Success; to which recourse may be had, and wherein Relief may be found under all the Difficulties of *Life*; whether arising from our *Conditions* or *Persons*, and Fears, and Sorrows for *Death* both our own and others.

i. *The Actual Belief of our Resurrection is a Mighty Support under all Difficulties and Straits of Life*

Under Dif-
ficulties of
our Condi-
tion.

A8. 3. 19.
2 Cor. 4.
16, 14,

Heb. 11. 35

Rom. 8. 18.

i. *Arising from our Condition*; which tho never so Miserable, yet can never be Hopeless, or other than what one may see to a Comfortable end of, Which is therefore called by *St. Peter*, the *Time of Refreshing*. For which Cause, says *St. Paul*, we faint not, --- *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall rise up us also by Jesus*, --- And in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* we are informed that the *Martyrs* there mention'd did not accept of *Deliverance*, that they might receive a better *Resurrection*. For when all the *Enjoyments* of the *Present State* are deny'd or ravish'd from us, yet with this *Belief* there is enough in reserve. The *Present* will quickly be over; And the sooner shall we then possess our *Hopes*, and forget our *Troubles*. This is not the only *State* we have to depend on; And however it is here, we know it will be better hereafter; and that sufficient amends will be made for our *present Sufferings*, and which therefore are not worthy to be compared with the *Glory* which shall be revealed in us. So intirely may the *Troubles* of any *Condition* in this *World* be swallowed up, and removed by a lively *Expectation* of

a Glorious Resurrection to Life in the other World. And no less so may Troubles,

2. *Arising from our Persons*; being, whether *of our Persons*, Weak, Deformed, Sickly, or Maimed, which are so apt to disrelish the Comforts of any, and expose to many Discouragements in every Condition of the Present Life. Which, yet however not cured, cannot be resented as Incurable, since the *Resurrection* is intended for not only the *Restoration*, but *Perfection* of Humane Bodies. Here we are in a State of Weak and Corrupted Nature, and must live and die in it; and our Impatience cannot alter the common Course of things; But this our Hope may cure (if we will) our Impatience; and the Reflection on *what we shall be*, may reasonably content us for a while under the Sense of *what we are*, tho not so well as *what we would be*. Indeed if the present Blemishes and Defects were inseparable from the Body in the Resurrection, which are now the Disgrace and Burden of it, the Restlessness of our Resentment thereof, would be more excusable if not Unavoidable. But seeing our Corruptible, Dishonourable, Weak and Animal Bodies, will be raised in Incorruption, Glory, Power and Spirituality, the Prospect and Hope of a Certain Freedom may very well suffice to support under the present Affliction, and keep us calm and contented to be the Persons God hath made us, however that be, for the Present Scene. Not but that Health and Symmetry ought to be esteemed as Blessings by us; But that yet the want of such Blessings is not to discontent or deject us into Despair; because such present want, is not a final Denial, or total Deprivation of them: But God intends in due time to dispense them beyond any present Perfection

to all. And tho some fall yet short of the common Measure and Degrees thereof, yet why should this disturb us? since these Bodies are not the Quality'd Bodies we must live in for ever; which the Grave will cure of all their Infirmities; where, as the *Corruption* wherein they are Sown destroys all Distinction, so the *Incorruption* wherein they shall be raised will make none. So relievable are all Difficulties and Straits of Life, from the Actual Belief of such a *Resurrection*. And which also is,

Against
Fears of
Death.
Of our own
Death.
1 Cor. 15.
19.

3. The only Support against the Fears of our Own, and Sorrow for Others Death. 1. The Fears of our own Death are very Natural and Terrible; Which destroying the Present, necessarily refers us to a Future State for Relief against them. And if in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable; Where troubles are so thick, and Satisfaction thin and empty, that without Hope of some Release Men would appear more Condemned to Live than to Die. Even Life it self would kill; and we should sink under the perpetual Apprehension of a Future Nothing; hate Life and still fear Death; not enjoy our selves here, and be afraid of being lost for ever, when we shall go hence. Therefore to make Life tolerable, even Nature hath perswaded Men all along to hope for *Immortality*; as being no slight support against the Fears of Dying, to be assured that when the Soul is delivered from the Burden of the Flesh, it is also freed from the grasp of Death. Which yet was no Provision for the Cure of Melancholly Thoughts for the loss of the Body; to which there is a Natural Affection, that wishes it well, and grieves to think of the Fate it is doom'd to. And therefore our only Comfort, in this Case, can be the Hopes of a Glorious

rious

rious *Resurrection*, that will restore both our Soul and Body in a more advantageous Re-Union. And tho, notwithstanding even this, it is certain that the present Separation of Soul and Body by Death, appears sad and amazing to us; yet a due Sense of the Consequent advantage intended to us by the *Resurrection*, is sufficient to support us under it; as what will abundantly recompence for it. And if we will be but so Wise (as we have all the Reason and Encouragement in the World to be) as to order our Concerns accordingly, that we may not be surpris'd thereby, we shall be able to resent a Removal hence by Death, no otherwise than we would the quitting of a Ruinous House, in order to have it pull'd down and Rebuilt for our more commodious Reception. For so no less for our Convenience is our Departure hence, which makes it to us *Gain to Die*. To be irreconcilable whereto, is to prefer the Infirmities of Mortality before the Perfection of a Life Immortal, and to content our selves with the present Inconveniences of our Ruinous Tabernacles, rather than undergo the short Fatigue of an Unwilling Remove, in order to have them Rebuilt in durable Places. Alas! to be fond of the Present Life only, is to dote on Misery. And had God doom'd us to an Eternity in such Bodies, it would have been as great an Instance of his *Justice*, as our Dying out of them is now of his *Mercy* to us. For, we see, even of as short a Continuance as they are, Many impatient of their Length; and some desperately venturing to shorten them by their own Hands, rather than suffer any longer the Insupportable Miseries incident thereto. The Wants, and Cares, and Toils, and Pains they necessarily Create are

Sorrow for
the Death
of Others.

sufficient Tryal to the most approved Patience. And a Freedom from all these must needs reconcile any reasonable Man, who hath received but a Common Share thereof to his Removal hence therefrom. And why then should we slavishly fear to foresee our Dissolution; since by this means only our *Gain* must come; and for once dying out of an Imperfect, Unhappy, Mortal State, we shall enter upon that which can alone Complete and Immortalize our Happiness? And surely such Vast Hopes and mighty Expectations are sufficient Consolation to support Nature under the Melancholly Apprehensions of a Dissolution. And he that cannot submit to the Dominion of the King of Terrors on such Encaourgement, ought rather to lament the Weakness of his *Faith*, than the insupportableness of his *Fears*; there being nothing Terrible or Sad in parting with Life to have it mended. And it being an encouraging Crop, from a *Body sown in Corruption*, Disgrace and Weakness, to receive it *raised* and refined into Glory and Immortality. And what will fortify against the Fears of our own Dying, May, 2. *Moderate our Sorrowing for the Death of any others dear unto us*: Who, tho removed from us, cannot be lost thereby; neither is it but for their greater *Gain* that we are deprived of their Company. While we had them alive, we could not keep them always in our Embraces: Sometimes Business did necessitate Absence, which yet we then bore chearfully, because we expected a Return, and hoped for it. And now they are called from us by Death, it is no more than what was as much expected, and on no less necessary Occasion, and it was ordered by God, and is designed for their Advantage, and we have much more Assurance of their

Re 3

Return ; and we ought not to resent impatiently, when done by God, what we so often took cheerfully before, when done by Nature and Occasion. And tho their stay now from us may be something longer than formerly, Yet it is but because there is more Occasion for it, and 'tis with God that they are detained from us, and 'tis in order to render our Meeting more Comfortable, and whom we our selves expect shortly to follow, and we know not how soon, neither hope we to be Happy till it come to pass. And therefore it is unreasonable (as the *Apostle* argues) for *Christi- 1 Thes. 4.* *ans* pretending to such Hopes, to Sorrow, even as *13.* *others which have no Hope.*

Such is the great *Consolation*, being an Expedient of God's own providing, for *Christians* to rely on, and support their Patience by, under all the Sufferings and Fears they are liable to in Life and Death, not to be disregarded without the loss both of our *Pains* and *Innocency*: There being no other Sufficient Comfort, the wilful Neglect whereof must needsturn our Troubles into Temptation, and Sorrow into Despair. Instead therefore of Complaining of our Crosses, we ought rather to support our selves with this Comfort under them; And when Troubles come, not suffer our selves so much to be Troubled *therewith*, as Comforted *Hereby*; This alone being the proper Method both to ease our present *Grief*, and at the same time preserve our *Integrity*. And therefore also,

2. *The Consideration of the Resurrection* (as it is a Comfort proper and able to make Life Easy, *Motive to Heavenly* so it) is a *Proper and Powerful Motive to make a Mind'd-Christians Life in this World better.* And this is the *nesi.* other Use of this Doctrine urged by *St. Paul*, Exhorting

horting hence to the *seeking Things above*, and referring the Concern of this, wholly in order to Preparation for the next Life. Agreeable where-to he also argues in our *Text*, *I have hope* (says he) *towards God, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and Unjust.* And here-in (adds he in the following Verse) *do I exercise my self to have always a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man.* A Good Life being the Natural Consequent of the Belief of such a Resurrection: And he who is really possessed with *this Hope*, cannot choose but *purify himself* from gross Carnality, and raise and refine his Affections and Conversation to become Heavenly; especially upon these Two Accounts hence following; Even because we have another Life to live besides what we now are spending in this World; and because the Life we expect next is so much more considerable than the Present to us.

*This not
the only
Life.*

1. *This is not the only Life we have to Live:* And therefore not all we have to care for; Expecting when this is ended to begin another Life, and to rise again from the Dead, and to assume the Body again. Upon which account it is therefore fit that we concern our selves at present how we shall then live hereafter, and take care how we live in our Bodies now, that we may hope to live in them with more Comfort the next time, for a loose inconsiderate way of living can be reasonable upon no account, but either because this present Life will never End, or never be Succeeded by any more Life; In either of which Cases a Man might be allowed to provide for this Life with all the Care and Solitude that he can without thinking of any other: But if we must Die, and after Death must rise to Life again, the same

same Reason that obliges us to be careful for this, ought also to prevail with us to provide for another Life. For the Provisions and Enjoyments of this present Life are not able to reach all our Wants, and a sensual way of Living can only be suited to a World that affords no other than sensual Delights; and if we be not provided to live again, as well as here now, we cannot be thought to live like our selves, or in any Capacity to be Happy. For to *live like our selves*, is to live like Persons who know they must live again; and for such to be in a *Capacity to be Happy* is to provide while we live now, for our future Comfort when we shall live again; which is to take care of all our Life, and to live on Earth, as designed and expecting to live in Heaven also; Like Amphibious Creatures designed for both States, and therefore not to be so wholly addicted to one, as to become wholly unprovided and incapacitated for the other: Which is to degenerate and debase our Nature, as certainly nothing doth more, than Mens groveling here *below*, who are designed also for things *above*. And that more especially because,

2. *The Life we expect next is so much more Considerable than the Present is to us*; and that both in *Quality and Duration*. In *Quality*, the Present is very deficient as it is Mortal. And yet were this all the Life we had to expect, our Fondness and Solicitousness for it might be reasonable, because even such a Life would be the best we know of, and a bad one better than none at all. But when Death which puts an end to this Life, will it self end, and put us in a Capacity to live better than ever we have done; our present fondness to Life, should much rather incline us to the best Life;

The future Life more Considerable in Quality.

And Duration.
tion.

Life to take care of the Future, however it fares with us at present; that we who take such Pains to live Happy for a Moment may not be careless how we shall live for ever; and since we wish for a Life Immortal, we should not content our selves with caring for no other Life but this which is Mortal. For what a Shame is it to love only a Mortal State of Vexation and Disappointment; when there is a time coming, that unless by our Sensualities we disappoint our selves, we shall also live in an immortal State of Joy and Glory? Especially, further considering, that in Duration, the Present is the shortest Life we have to live. So that be it how it will with us in this State, it must end and will quickly be over; And then it will not be what we have been, but what we shall be for ever, that will make us Happy or Miserable. For there is no Proportion between the shortness of this, and the Eternity of the next Life. And seeing we are made capable, and necessitated to live the next as well as this, it will concern us chiefly to provide for the next while we are in this. And since it was by Sin that this Life, which we are so hugely solicitous for, became Mortal; and which after all our Care to maintain it, we must lose; it surely concerns us, by our former Misfortune, to take Care of the next, lest by our provoking God, and Corrupting our selves, we incur the Doom of Eternal Death, and become incapable to live that Immortal Life the Resurrection is designed to enter us upon.

As therefore we ever hope that the Soul and Body should meet each other with any Comfort again after their Separation, it concerns us to live while they are now together in the strictest

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Observance of Virtue and Purity, which is the only Principle of a Glorious Resurrection. Opposing and subduing Carnality that first brought them into a Mortal Condition, and learning to live the Life they are designed to live for ever. Which is the Immortal State we have all of us before us, and will be to us just what we ourselves now make it. So that what we are now doing, is of lasting Consequence, and is for ever. And tho we act in a Body that will shortly be dissolv'd, yet neither those Actions nor that Body terminate with this Life, but as the one must be Accounted for, so the other must live again; and the Man that Acteth bear the award of that Account for ever in the next Life. And as it is appointed for all Men once to die, so is it appointed for none to die more than Once; And when that once is over, then we must all live again, never to Die more; and shall have a Life we can never part with, and Bodies as Immortal as the Soul that will hold out together for ever. And therefore this is the Life that will date our Happiness or Misery, and make us what we shall be for ever, and calls for our greatest regard to Endeavour that it may then make us what we would be; That so when we lose this Life we may therewith lose all our Sorrows; And when we shall recover it, we may receive therewith the Joys of our Lord in those amazing Improvements thereof hoped for in the Resurrection.

Such is the Import, the Certainty and Intent of this Doctrine thereof; which, when we Confess, we must, accordingly, be understood to mean that we verily Believe that the Life which Death takes from us, consisting in the Union of Soul and Body, the Resurrection will restore; And tho the Soul never dies,
yet

yet will it not always exist in a State of Separation from the Body after Death; But shall again return into its own Body, out of which it was exiled, and live again therein an Humane, tho' no more a Mortal Life: which we are sure is no other than what is Possible, Probable, and Infalibly Certain; and whereon therefore we ought to build all our Comfort against the Sorrows of Life, and Fears of Death; And thereby to engage and excite our Care, so to live now as to live the better for it for ever hereafter; That now being made free from Sin, and become the Servants to God, we may have our Fruit unto Holiness, and the end everlasting Life.

Rom. 6.
22.

To which blessed end of this our Faith may we all, thro' the Merits of Christ, by the Sanctification of his Spirit in God's due time, happily arrive! To which Glorious Trinity be ascribed all Honour, Power, and Dominion, now and evermore! Amen.

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SERMON XX.

ON THE

Twelfth Article

OF THE

APOSTLES CREED.

Mat. xxv. 46.

And these shall go away into Everlasting Punishment: But the Righteous into Life Eternal.

TH^O the different Eternal State of the Soul be the immediate consequent of Death, Yet the digingnishing Unalterable State of the Man (as consisting of both Soul and Body, and to which this Text refers) is not till after the Resurrection; and therefore rightly made the succeeding and concluding Article in the Creed, to direct and determine our Faith concerning the State of Man after the Resurrection in the World to come: Which is the Life Everlasting; (the last Priviledge design'd us; for the Blessing whereof the Holy Ghost

capacitates) and is explain'd in this *Text*, to comprehend the Future State or Condition both of the *Wicked* and *Righteous* there; adjudicated to them by that final Judgment, described by our Saviour in the Context. Both which being Matters of Faith equally necessary, and of like Fundamental Consequence (both yielding the highest Encouragements to good Practice and Determents from bad) I shall distinctly Discourse on them; beginning with

*The Ever-
lasting Pu-
nishment of
Wicked
Men.*

I. *The Everlasting Life of Wicked Men, after the Resurrection and Judgment, who shall go away into Everlasting Punishment.* Concerning which, I shall

1. Prove, that there is such a State reserved for the Wicked in another World.
2. Describe the Nature thereof.
- And, 3. Acquaint you with the Influence this ought to have upon us.

*Its Cer-
sainty.*

1. *That there is a future State of Everlasting Punishment reserved for the Wicked:* Who being Raised again to Life, shall for ever Live in Penal Misery. This the *Scripture* plainly asserts in the mention made of the *Worm that never dies*, and the *Fire that ever burns*; And livelily represents in the Parable of *Dives*; and absolutely supposes, in Threatning a State worse than *Annihilation* to Sinners: For whom, our Saviour says, it had been better they had never been Born. Or that a *Millstone* were hanged about their Neck, and they drowned in the depth of the Sea. Whereof the *Heathen*, by the *Light of Nature*, have frequently expressed very sensible Notions: And *Guilt in the Conscience* seldom fails to produce very uneasy Reflections and unavoidable Convictions; And without which there could be no security to the just and peaceable Governance of God over his Ratio-

Mat. 26.
24.

Mat. 18.6.

al Creatures. For a more favourable denunciation would be no restraint, when as even this proves so little regarded. Which is but what *suits the Infinite* dreadful Majesty of God ; and even what *Sin deserves* that dares to affront him, who is not to be provoked on the like finite Terms as Man is ; and is the *Stipulated price* Men choose to Sin at, and have *fair Warning* given them of, and *may refuse it* if they will, and shall be *convinced of the Equity* of such Punishment for their Obstinate Folly, if they will not in time be wiser.

So firmly is the Sinner, upon all such weighty Considerations, obliged to the *Everlasting Punishments* of another World : Who, as he must necessarily rise again, so must it be to *Condemnation*; never either again to Die, or be at Ease ; His *Punishment* as sure as his *Life* being *Everlasting*. Therefore

2. Describe we now the Nature of such *Everlasting Life of Punishment*, the *Wicked at the Resurrection* shall go into ; Considering distinctly, first its *Punishments*, and then the *Everlastingness* thereof, which makes them such indeed.

1. The Punishment of the Wicked's *Everlasting Life*, we believe will arise from both his *Losses* Its Punishment of, and his *Crosses* ; distinguish'd by the Names of *Pœna Damni*, and *Pœna Sensus* ; Being deprived of all Comforts, and loaded with the most exquisite Miseries. For the End of the present Life, is the End of all the Sinners Enjoyments. Who, as he *received all his good Things* here, so will he suffer the want of all Enjoyments hereafter, whether *Temporal, Spiritual, or Eternal*. Of all the Superfluities of his *Temporals*, not so much as *one drop of Water*, will he be Master of, to procure him *one Moments Relief*. His neglected *Spiritual Advantages*

vantages (that would now stand him only in stead) he will too late wish for, when impossible to be recovered. And between him and the *Eternal Rewards*, an impassible *Gulph* will exclude his Approach from ever being nearer than to make him more sensible of his Loss, by suffering him to view at a Distance, what he shall Despair of ever getting within his own Reach. And how will such bear the Loss of all, who cannot be now content, while they want any Trifle their Heart is set on? What *Ease*, to the Banish'd from *Everlasting Rest*? What shall support, when depriv'd of all Comforts? What greater Misery, than to want all Happiness? Or what need of further Hell, than to be turn'd out of all the Emoluments of this Life, and fall short of the Advantages of the next? And yet is this but the Negative and least part of the *Everlasting Punishment* attending the Wicked, whose *Crosses* will equal, if not exceed his *Losses*, and subject him to *Misery*, as well as Deprive him of *Happiness*, arising from his *Abode* and *Company* in the next Life.

Of Sense
from the

Place.

His *Abode* must be *Hell*; a *Place*, (where ever it is) Melancholy and Dreadful enough to think of, and inconceivably more so (which God, by his Grace, defend us from!) to enter and inhabit. Where dwells nothing but Sorrow and Despair, Pain and Horror, with every thing to render it intolerable to abide in, and yet impossible to evade or amend any of its Nuisances. Its Situation is Internal, where Unwholesome Sulphurous Fumes arise and annoy. Thick Darkness and intolerable Heat is the Constitution of that dire Region; Shrieks and dismal Groans the only Harmony of those Spheres. A Scene of Sorrow that represents no other Prospect but the

the Wrath and Vengeance of an Incensed God, and erects the Stage whereon the deepest Tragedy will be always Acting. Calling sometimes by the Name of *Prison*, sometimes *Utter Darkness*, sometimes *Death*, *Hell*, *A Lake burning with Fire and Brimstone*, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Any thing that is the most painful to Sense, and terrible to Reflection, being deem'd little enough to express the Miserableness of that Place. Whose Inhabitants are the worst of *Company*, and the worse for being a *Company*; among whom all bad Humours will meet to spoil the Converse, and render it worse than the most dismal Solitude. *Rancour* and *Malice*, *Treachery* and *Revenge*, *Contention* and *Turbulency*, *Terror* and *Sorrow* are the very Genius of this Abode, and reign in every Breast doomed thereto; the Foundation of an eternal Quarrel and Discontent being here laid in Sin, which will there break out and execute an everlasting and insupportable Punishment in Hell. For all the Companions in Sin being there gathered together, and driven from the Presence of God, with the Devil and his Angels into *utter Darkness* and Misery; what can be expected, but that being incapable of Comfort, they should aggravate each others Sorrow and Sufferings? Where the Wretched Sinner will be intirely given up to the Powerful Malice of Merciless Fiends; and from the present Sense of insupportable Torments, whet his fury against his Fellow-Sufferers, (that contributed to delude him hither) to maintain a continual intercourse of mutual Mischiefs and Vexations; increas'd by an Universal Lamentation, and continued Terrors both from within and abroad. For amidst a confinement to this hateful-Company, the Sinner, alas,

will prove here the worst Companion to himself; Carrying his Hell with him, which cannot but make him wretched, in whatever *Place* or *Company* he be. His *Apprehension*, to feel his Misery, being then more Clear and Enlarged. All his *Passions* of Shame, and Sorrow, and Despair, and Fury, and Revenge, to gnaw and worry him, being let loose at once upon him. And sure there will need no further aggravation of his *Punishment* to make him Miserable, unless

Its Eternity.

2. *The Everlastingness of it*, which implies the *Extremity* and *Eternity*, of Misery, and makes complete the Hell of the Damned. For where there is no Remission, nor Intermision, nor End of Torment, there must necessarily be sorrow both beyond Imagination or Sense, and without either Consolation or Hope. For an *Everlasting Life* of such Misery exceeds the Limits of a finite *Imagination*; and the Terrors of a trembling Conscience (tho oft too Tragical, yet) are infinitely short of these *Terrors of the Lord*. Who knows the *Power of thine Anger*? cries out the *Psalmist*, which so far exceeds all known Misery; (being purely *Punitive, Immediate, Unmixed, Continued, Universal* and *Eternal*) that from the most exquisite Tortures of Humane Power and Malice, can be framed but too favourable an Idea of *Everlasting Punishment*.

Pf. 90. 11.

Punitive.

For being *Everlasting* it must be purely *Punitive*; not inflicted to *Correct*, but to *Torment*; not as the *Chastisements* of a tender Father, but the *Punishments* of a severe Judge; so that after Millions of Ages suffering, the Damned will be only more Miserable, but never the Better thereby. Neither is it a finite Power, that can inflict an *Everlasting Punishment*, nor second Causes that can Mediate in such Executions. But what must come im-

Immediate.

immediately from God himself, *into whose hands it is* Heb. 10. 31
 a confessedly fearful Thing to fall, and which there-
 fore St. Paul very emphatically calls an Everlast- 2 Thes. 1. 9
 ing Destruction from [or as some read it, by]
 the Presence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power;
 Because as God's Glorious Power will be effective
 of the Wicked's Destruction, so will his Presence,
 the dread Presence of him who is a Consuming Fire, Heb. 12.
 Torture and Melt them down before him. And 29.
 this is Misery capable of no allay; there being no Unmixt.
 Degrees can bound and limit what is Eternal;
 and it is therefore called the Wrath of God which Rev. 14. 10.
 is poured out without mixture, whether of Mercy,
 or Hope, or Pity to moderate one Moments suffer-
 -ance. The Door of Mercy will be shut, and the
 Anchor of Hope cut off, and all Bowels of Compassi- Prov. 1. 26.
 on denied by the God of Mercy, who will laugh at Psal. 58. 10.
 their Destruction; by Angels and Saints, who
 shall rejoyce when they see the Vengeance; by their
 fellow Sufferers, the Devil and the Damned, insult-
 -ing over their Misery; And even by themselves,
 who will not only Weep through Grief, but gnash
 their Teeth thro fury and madness at themselves,
 whom they will never forgive or spare, for in-
 -curring what they feel, and can never forget.
 Neither is Intermision consistent with what is Eter-
 -nal; which will oblige the Punishment to be abide- Continued,
 -ing, that will give no Rest Day nor Night, admit of Rev. 14. 11
 no lucid Intervals no temporary Diversions or
 Forgetting of Sorrow, where the Wrath of God
 abides and the Worm perpetually gnaws, and the
 Smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.
 Neither will any Part more than Moment of Time
 be free from Pain, which will be as Universal as Universal
 Constant; where it is Everlasting in Hell, the whole
 variety of Torture at once falling upon every

For ever.

Power and Faculty, Sense and Member, both of Soul and Body, filled with Anguish and Vexation within and without. The Sinner suffering in every Part wherein he acted Sin, in Degree and Variety suitable to Capacity and Desert: And all this (which is more than all) must he suffer for ever, to all Eternity: In which one Word, therefore, is included all the rest, and only this express'd in the Text. *Everlasting Punishment*, compleateth all the Evil that can be said or imagin'd of Punishment. It expresses the Vertical point of Misery; from whence the strongest Sight cannot reach any bottom for Hope to fix her Anchor in; nor all the Power of Arithmetick number the length of what is endless. So that it is a *Punishment* that will always be Punishing, and must be endured tho Intolerable,

All which believed strongly, and Reflected on intently (however, here delivered Briefly) would not fail to produce the following Advantages to us; which is the Subject of our remaining Particular, obliging me to

It Influence on

3. Lastly, *Acquaint you with the Influence this ought to have upon us*, particularly with respect to that direct Aspect it hath upon Sin, upon this World, and upon our Duty. For

Sin.

1. *With Respect to Sin*: The Premises consider'd, what an Evil is it discover'd to be to us? How much to be fear'd and abominated by us; so as to be avoided in our selves, and bewail'd and oppos'd all we can even in Others?

For surely that can be no light Fault (however light we venture to make of it) that is able to provoke even Mercy it self to punish with so heavy a Vengeance: And how much soever we may be inclined to Love it for it self, yet we cannot but hence

hence see our Concern to dread it for its sad Consequences; As what nothing can reasonably Recommend or Excuse. And, therefore, as it concerns us to beware of it our selves, so to avoid being the Occasion thereof to any Other; as the greatest Injury and Cruelty towards him; as far exceeding the spoiling of Goods or Life, as Innocence and Heaven are more worth. For it is not, Alas! the Sin, but *Hell* that the Temptation ends in: And as no Man, in his right Sences, can desire to lie down in *Everlasting Burnings*, so neither ought he to seduce any other thereinto. This implies too much Hazard and Cruelty, to Fool and Frolick on the Brink of this bottomless Pit, and in Sport and Mirth to thrust one another inconsiderately into it. Much rather ought we, with the greatest concern, to do all we can to save one another herefrom, by often warning of the Danger, intreating, urging, and (where we can) commanding and forcing further from it; with no less Solitude, than the *Rich Man in Hell*, endeavouring to prevent our *Brethrens* coming into this Place of Torment; and with the *Apostle*, knowing these Terrors of the Lord, not ceasing (however ill for the present it may be took) to persuade Men. For as the worst of Punishment is allotted to Sin, so is Sin the worst of Evil, and most cautiously to be avoided.

Lu. 16.28.

2Cor. 5.11

2. With respect to this World: How indifferent *The World* will the Sense of these Future Torments in reserve for Sinners, preserve us thereto; Keeping us no less free from Envyng others Prosperous Wickedness, than from Murmuring at our own deserved Afflictions. For our Term of this Life being the shortest part of our Being, is of least Concern to us how we fare therein: And if we can but secure

Lu. 16. 8.
Pet. 2. 11.

our selves from the *Everlasting Punishments* of the Wicked in *Life Everlasting*, we have no Reason to disturb our selves with either *their*, or *our own* present Allotments. For in such a World as this, and according to the usual Course of Things, it is *their* Time now to flourish, as they are the *Children of this World*; And *ours* to be hardly dealt with, where our Profession makes us *Strangers and Pilgrims*. And if ever Wicked Men are Prosperous, and Good Men Afflicted, it must be in this Temporal Life (and where usually therefore, God suffers it, for wise Ends, to be so) because the *Life Everlasting* of the Wicked is all *Punishment*, and that of the *Righteous* all *Life* and *Felicity* indeed. And who, that considers this, will conclude a Prosperous Sinner an Happy Man, or an Afflicted Saint, a Miserable Man, so as to *Envy* or *Repine* at the present Dispensations of Providence? For this is all the Good the Sinner must expect; which at the best is very *Unsatisfactory*, *Mixt* and *Inconstant*; and what e'er he conceits it to be, his share therein will quickly be over; and his next Allotment make it a very hard Bargain, so that it will little move us to see, what the most Prosperous Sinner *now is*, when we also consider what he shortly *Will be*. What tho he seems much the Happier Man at present; freed by his Sin from Troubles, which our strict Sanctity may Subject us unto? Alas! His day of Execution is not yet come, tho he be already Condemn'd, and only repriev'd for more Publick Justice. And is that Traytor Happy that is in Hold, tho better fed than many a Loyal Subject, whose next remove is to Execution? Should the Lean Ox, that is a daily Drudge under an heavy Yoke, and Sufferer by the sharp Goad, *Envy* the Happiness

ness of its Fellow-Creature that is freed from this Hardship to wanton, for a short time, in a Fat Pasture; when as all this, is but to doom and prepare him the sooner for the Shambles? Who will envy a Dying Man the Happiness of a Down-Bed, or the Phrensy of a Merry Dream? Better is it to want the present Ease and Diversion, than to have his certain Danger. And who, in his Wits, would not be content, for a while, with any Thing, to escape it? The most unpalatable Medicine is more eligible than Sickness and Death; and no Sufferings comparable to Damnation. Let who will therefore hug himself in Wealth and Greatness; and Riot and Debauch away his Portion in the present State. Let him be as great as the World and his own Wishes can make him; yea, and as well pleased therewith as heightned Sense and a stunn'd Conscience will permit him. I cannot Envy him his Fortune, nor repine that it is not mine own, *because these shall go away into Everlasting Punishment*: And then *whose shall these Things be?* Lu. 12.20. Or *what shall it profit a Man, if he gain the whole World* Mar. 8.36, *and lose his own Soul?* Welcome, far rather welcome to me shall be the Scorn and Injury of abused Piety; the severe but wholesome Chastisements of our Heavenly Father; the strict Discipline of Self-Denyals and Mortifications; the faithful Disturbances of an awakened Conscience. Welcom any other Calamity, rather than Hell (the just desert of my Sins) and the rather welcom, for being intended to reform Sin and prevent Hell. The World is no more to me than just as it contributes to the welfare of my future Being. And therefore who would desire to change *everlasting Joys* because of some present Inconveniences, for *everlasting Punishments* because of some transient Delights? Therefore 3. With

An Holy
Life.

3. *With Respect to Duty*, which is the only means of Preservation. How earnestly Careful and Diligent ought we to be, and hence excited thereto, and thankfully lay hold on any Terms (appear they never so hard) if so be we can but be sure to escape such *Everlasting Punishment*? For nothing is hard in comparison of *Damnation*. And a great Mercy it is, surely, to us, that as any Way is opened for us to escape by (whose Desert and just Doom it was) so that we are thus powerfully Urg'd and Driven to endeavour it by the most likely Motive to prevail upon us, whom Vengeance only can Reclaim, Terrors allure, and the severest Threats prove Mild enough to draw and preserve from our Ruine. Infomuch that God seems Solicitous for our *Salvation*, in nothing more than in his severest Threats to us of our *Damnation*. The surest way to *Heaven*, being by the Gates of *Hell*; and nothing more naturally reconciling to *Holiness*, than the Belief and Consideration of this Consequence of *Wickedness*. For whom these *Terrors of the Lord* will not persuade, what is there to be expected further that will? And, therefore, it is to be observed, that Sinners are never hardned against Duty, till forgetful of *Hell*.

Let us then no longer withstand the Force of this most Cogent Motive, to put forth our utmost Care and present Diligence to be Reformed and Reconciled to our Heavenly Father; whose Terms are not unreasonable, neither to be rejected but upon Infinite Disadvantage to our own Interest; who are necessitated either to undergo them, or what is much more Intolerable. *Hell* is so exceedingly much the worst of Evil that nothing may be allow'd to make us Fear, or Discourage

courage us in Comparison thereof. And a Mercy it is, where it appears terrible enough to scare from the Evil of Sin, and to drive us with Resolution through all our Duty, so we may escape at last and be saved. *Everlasting Punishments* are well miss'd upon any Condition, and *Life Eternal* will abundantly recompence the worst of Hardships. And therefore as we had better submit to do any thing, rather than be Damn'd; so can we not more advantageously employ our selves than in our hearty Endeavours to be saved. And to convince you hereof, as I have represented to you the Misery of one, so now proceed I to Display before you the Felicity of the other; Being the other Branch of the *Article* and *Text* under Consideration, viz.

II. *The Everlasting Life of Righteous Men after the Resurrection and Judgment, who shall go into Life Eternal.* Concerning which also, I shall in like manner. 1. Prove that there is such a State reserved for the Righteous in another World. 2. Describe the Nature thereof. And, 3. Put you in mind of the Influence this ought to have upon us.

1. *That there is also a Future State of Life Eternal reserved for the Righteous.* Who being raised again, shall for ever be distinguish'd from the Wicked; no longer to be involved in the same Fate (as now they are) with them, but part Company for ever. And as the Sinners shall then go away into everlasting Punishment, so shall the Righteous into *Life Eternal*; A State quite different to that of the Wicked; which only deserves the Name of *Life*; and which Name therefore is only mention'd in the *Text* and *Article*, (with reference to the

*The ever-
lasting Life
of Good
Men;*

*Its Cer-
tainty.*

the

the *Righteous* only) as being a sufficient Motive to induce all to become *Righteous*, and reasonably supposing that none that believe it will forego it; being designed as much a *Reward* as the other is expressed to be a *Punishment*. Of which all Mankind have ever been possessed with strong Expectation, and Naturally thirsted after, with Desires and Capacity which no confluence of Worldly Felicity can possibly quiet and satisfy; and which therefore (were it possible for him to be Deceived and Disappointed herein) would necessarily render Man the most unhappy of Creatures (all whose Enjoyments are suited to their Propensions) and argue him only (the most Noble part of the Creation) to be *made in vain*, and purposely framed to be tormented between *Desire* and *Despair*, having an earnest Propension after Happiness, and an utter Incapacity of ever Enjoying it. Which is an Imagination not to be conceived without vile Imputation to the Perfections of our Maker, no way agreeable to Infinite Wisdom, Immense Goodness, or Exact Justice. For God who never made any thing in vain, cannot be supposed to be deceived in Disposing Man to a Perfection he is not made Capable of. Neither can he who designs all Things for Good be delighted to behold the Work of his own Hands spending it self in weary Struglings towards him, and vext all the while it continues in Being, with the Desire of what it shall never enjoy. Much less will he so far disparage his Providence, as not to clear the Equity and Justice thereof, in some future Dispensation, which is so manifestly irreconcilable to the present, wherein *all things come alike to all; one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked; to the*

Good

Eccl. 9. 2.

Good, and to the Clean, and to the Unclean; so that to shew himself a God that judgeth in the Earth, there must of necessity, verily be a Reward for the Righteous. And for this, it is sufficient to us, that we have his own Word and faithful Promise to rely on, which he can no more falsify than cease to be God, given to the Ancient Patriarchs (among whom *Abraham* is said to look for a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God; a better Country, that is an Heavenly.) Typified to them by the Sabbath, By the Land of Canaan, and Rest therein. Upon the Knowledge whereof *Moses* despised *Egypt*, *Job* triumph'd on his Dunghil, with *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; The Men of whom the World was not Worthy bore Sufferings otherwise Insupportable; and it was *David's* Consolation under Temptation, that God would afterwards receive him to Glory. But especially was this Truth hugely illustrated by the coming of our Saviour, who brought to Light Life and Immortality thro the Gospel; which he confirm'd by his Doctrine, Example, Miracles, Death and Resurrection; so that the *Christians Hope* is not supported by Credulity, but ascertain'd to him to his own Content; insomuch that without it he must confess himself to be, of all Men the most Miserable, and with it no Misery need to Deject him. Therefore

Ps. 58. 11.

Heb. 11.
10, 16.Job. 19. 25.
Heb. 11.

Ps. 73. 24.

2 Tim. 10.

1 Cor. 15.
19.

2. Describe we the Nature of this Life Eternal, which is Peculiar to the Righteous at the Resurrection: Considering it also distinctly, first, as it is Life; and then as it is Eternal Life; which implies not only Happiness, but the Supreme Happiness of Man; beyond which, as he cannot, so neither will he need to Expect any thing. For

It's Happi-
ness from
the

1. *As it is Life*; It denotes Happiness, to which all are naturally inclined, and aspire after to preserve; the continuance whereof under the Law seems therefore to have been proposed as the main Reward of Obedience; and which indefinitely in its Perfection implies both the *Absence of all Grief and Misery* (a Miserable Being, being a Kind, if not the worst Kind, of Death) and *an Enjoyment of all that is truly and perfectly Good* (there being so much Allay and Abatement of Life, as there is of Perfection). And therefore we may conclude,

Freedom
from Grief.

1. *That the Future State of the Righteous will be a Life of Happiness, freed from all Grief and Misery, of all kinds, whether Corporeal, Spiritual or Eternal. The Body, after the Resurrection, being no more liable to Disease or Pain, than to Corruption: Which being Glorify'd, will be impassible; without Infirmary, without Necessity, without Carefulness, without Disgrace, and without Complaint. The Eye will cease to Weep, the Breast to Sigh and Groan, the Tongue to Murmur, and the Countenance to fall. In Heaven the Wicked will Cease from Troubling, and the Weary be at Rest; a Great Gulf (the irreversible Decree of God) is the security of that State, as to prevent the Disturbances, and confirm the Misery of the Wicked, so to secure the Peace and Happiness of the Righteous; among whom, tho now most found, will Then be no more Death, nor Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former Things are pass'd away.*

Job 3. 17.

In like manner, the Mind will then be cleared from the Darknels of Ignorance, the Tumults of Rebellious Passions, the Hazzard of Temptations, the Sting of Guilt, and the Agonies of Repentance; and

and when the Possibility of Sinning shall Cease, Lu. 12. 19.
 then begins the Soul's *Requies*, not for many Years, Mat. 13.
 but endless Ages; all Things that offend being gathered out of this Kingdom. 415

Nor will it add a little to the Felicity of this State, to have therein escaped the *Everlasting Punishment of the Wicked*; which lie on the other side the Gulph far enough off from hurting, yet it may be near enough to raise our Joy from our Sight of the Dangers we have so narrowly missed.

Oh, Happy State! that will end all our Disasters, and heal our Grievs, and set us quite out of Danger, beyond the possibility of Fear! And how shall we have Reason to bless our selves in such a *Life*, that hath nothing at all of the Appendages of *Death* in it! Wherein, we, who all our time have been exposed to Storms and Hazards, and only liv'd to die daily, shall be securely landed, and settled to live a *Life Eternal*! And if there be so much of *Life* in this *Private* Part of Felicity, that only frees from all our Miseries; What a Transport of Being, must needs spring from its *Positive* Excellencies, that also instate us in perfect *Blessedness*? And therefore we further say,

2. That the Future State of the Righteous will be a *Enjoyment* of *Happiness*, possess'd of all compleat *Enjoyments*: of all Good, Where, as there will be nothing present to disquiet, so will there be nothing wanting to Satisfy the Blessed. There will be the Affluence of all Good, as well as the Absence of all Evil. Whatsoever is contain'd in *Abraham's Bosom*; in the *House of our Father*; in *Fulness of Joy*; in *Rest and Triumph*; in a *Feast*; a *Crown*, *Thrones*, *Robes*, *Palms* and *Kingdom*; in being for ever with the *Lord*; in a Word, in what Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor Heart of

of Man conceived, is the Felicity of this Blessed State. An Happiness, the very Privation whereof makes up a great part of the Misery of Hell; The Enjoyment of it, a greater of the Joy of Heaven! All that Man can bear, or is becoming God to give, will contribute to make the *Righteous* Happy in *Life Eternal*. And what that is, (so far as God hath thought fit to Reveal) we may apprehend arising partly from the Delectableness of the *Place* it self; partly from the Desirableness of its *Society*; partly from the *Change* wrought upon Nature; and partly, in fine, from the Exalted *Enjoyment* allotted to live in, for ever, there.

Place.

The Place is Heaven; far above the turbulent unwholsome Fogs of this dark World. The magnificent Court of the King of the Universe. The *Paradise* of the World, as *Eden* was only of the Earth. A *Theater*, chosen by God, of Bliss. A Region of Light and Glory. And (which to us is enough) the Residence of our Lord; to *be with whom*, is to be where we would be; and than where we cannot be better; or any where else to our Content, *for ever*.

Society.

2. *Its Society* is Pick'd and Chosen where we shall see God and live; Live in his Presence, Live in his Favour, Live on his fulness, neither over-whelm'd with his Majesty, or confounded with his Glory; but refresh'd and supported by both; *in his Presence*, enjoying *fulness of Joy*, and at his *Right Hand* reaping *Pleasures for evermore*. Where we shall see (whom we never yet saw, but have Believed on, and Liv'd to, and Suffer'd for) the ever blessed *Jesus*; whose *Glory* we shall then behold; and not only Co-habit, but be acquainted with; and in Heart and Will United to, and Reign with him, and Communicate in his Joys for ever. Where

Pf. 16. 11.

Joh. 17. 24.

all

all the Glorious Hosts of *Angels* (having successfully finished their *Ministry* to us) will Unanimously welcome us to Glory, and profitably with Delight, entertain us with their Friendly and Familiar Conversations. Where we shall meet with the *Glorious Assembly, and Church of the first born*; a Collection of all the Good Men that ever were from the Foundation of the World, Finding among them the best of our Relations and Friends, never more to lose them, nor to Sorrow with or for them. Congratulating each others Escape and Arrival. Enlarging our Acquaintance with all the Brave and Generous. Meeting with all the Endearments of Society; A Love that will endear all we shall meet with to us, and effectually recommend us to them. *Open-heartedness* and Integrity, that will offer us Security in one anothers Bosoms without Design or Suspicion. *Calmness of Temper* and Concord, that will Unite in Mind and Heart. *Condescension* and Submissiveness, that will Oblige and Familiarize with Freedom and Alacrity.

Heb. 1. 14.

Heb. 12: 23.

Alterati-

on.

1 Cor. 15: 8.

Phil. 3. 21.

The Alteration wrought then also upon our Natures will be Universal and Perfect; When the *Body*, sown in Corruption, shall be raised in Incorruption, [Vigorous, Hail and Durable] Sown in Dishonour, shall be raised in Glory, [Beautiful, Pure and Refulgent, fashion'd like unto Christ's Glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.] Sown in Weakness, shall be Raised in Power, [Willing and Able for the Eternal Services of an Exalted Spirit.] Sown a Natural Body, shall be raised a Spiritual Body, [Active, Subtile, and Refined] Changing thus its Qualities, tho retaining its Substance. When the *Soul* shall be glorified in all its Faculties, and the Divine Ful-

ness Replenish and Beautifie its *Understanding, Will and Affections*. The *Intellect* will be enlarged to its utmost Capacity, and that Capacity compleatly filled; being not only exercised about higher and more noble Objects, but with a clearer Apprehension, and quicker Perception. Where the *Saints in Light*, shall dive into the Secrets of Nature and Mysteries of Grace, and know what Wise Men, in their best Thoughts, most Desire and are yet least able to know. They shall know themselves, in the curious Mechanism of their Bodies, and finer Contexture of their Souls, and the Surprising improvement, in the Glorification of *Born*. In Heaven, it may be supposed we shall know one another; (where our Saviour makes mention of seeing Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets,) not only by outward Appearances, but even Internal Operations, when the *Secrets of all Hearts shall be revealed*, and every ones Breast clear and open, as free from Reserve, as it is from Deceit or Guile. But that which will Perfect and Felicitate Knowledge, will be in Heaven our Knowledge of God, whom we shall see as he is; Understand more of his incomprehensible *Essence*, without Mistake or sinful Curiosity; Discern more clearly his *Will* without Reserve or Regret; Perceive the Beauty of all his *Providences*, in the Disposition of Temporal Things in order to our Eternal Felicity; And be resolv'd in all the Riddles of his *Judgments and Decrees*, which have been Matters here of such fierce Disputes among us. And all this, and more, we shall know, in a more Facile, Certain, Comprehensive, and Satisfactory Manner and Degree; Being ever full of, and ever filling with the Knowledge of that inexhaustible variety of Matter, there presented to us for Everlasting

lasting Contemplation. --- The *Will*, also in this Glorified State will be perfectly regulated in an intire Reduction to that of God's; so that between him and the Saints in Heaven, there is but one Common Will and End, and Interest; and what is the Mind of God will be only ours; whereby we shall be perfectly eased of all the Hazard and Distraction of Choosing; thoroughly warranted of the Goodness and Rectitude of our own Choices; and abundantly satisfied both of the Wisdom and Success of them. --- The *Affections*, in fine, will be calm and orderly, concentrating themselves all in that of *Love*, and this will be extended to its utmost Perfection, in everlasting Delight and Uninterrupted Peace. And such a Blessed Society, met in a Place so Glorious, with such refined Capacities, we cannot imagin but that their Employment being suitable, will be the most Exalted and Ravishing: when the seed of *Grace* shall be ripened into *Glory*; and those devout Actings of a Sanctified Soul (so agreeable to Reason, tho imperfectly exerted here) shall be always *Seraphick* and Accompanied with the Vehemence without the Violence of a Rapture. For Good Men, when they go to Heaven, are not to be supposed to change the *Kind*, but only *Degree*, of their Employment, (what Divine Grace begins here to work in them being not only for a time, but for ever.) And therefore Perfected Saints, can only be Happy in a *Life* of Perfected Devotion, where *Faith* will triumph in Vision, *Hope* flame out into Fruition, and *Prayer* live for ever in full Enjoyments. Of Contemplation on the most Excellent Object, whereof the more they advance in Knowledge, the more they increase in *Love*. And *Love* is always accompany'd with Joy and Delight, that will excite *Praise* and

Adoration, wherein Pious Souls, as they find even an Heaven oft upon Earth, so will they enjoy an Unspeakable Bliss in Heaven.

Such is the *Life* (consider'd in *it self only*, so far as is permitted us at present) of Glorify'd Creatures, Assembled in Heaven, Triumphant, which is *Life*, Emphatically so, because the Perfection of it, and nearest resembling its Original, even that which is Divine, being *Eternal* also. And therefore we are yet further to Contemplate its Nature, as was said,

*The Excess
of this Happi-
ness.*

2. *As it is Eternal Life*; importing the Supreme Felicity of Humane Nature; In as much as it hereby informs us, that it must necessarily be *what infinitely surpasses all the Enjoyments of this Life, which is but Temporal*, and consequently that it will be Pure and Refined above Sense; Unmixed and Unallay'd without it; Continued without Interruption or Disturbance; Permanent without wast or diminution; Fully Satisfactory to all; Free and easily come by: And ever Enjoy'd without loathing or Satiety. And this is the least can be said in its Import and Recommendation; which also
- 1 Jo. 3. 2. probably is *what Equals, if not Surpasses even the Life of Angels*, because resembled to the likeness of God; to which, while some of them aspired, they are, not only, never said to have been advanc'd, but to have lost their first Station, and to have been Destroy'd for their Ambition. However
- 2 Cor. 5. 7. it is manifestly far beyond *what Thought can Fancy, or Tongue Express, or God hath thought fit to Reveal, or Time can Measure* to us, who converse only with Temporals, and Walk only by Faith, and not yet in the Sight of Eternity. And yet it is no more than what we are assured of; God's Word frequently declaring this Happy *Life* to be Eternal,

nal; And *nothing can hinder him from bestowing such a Blessing upon us; since an Act not of Justice (as the Everlasting Punishment of the Wicked is, which necessitates some Proportion to be between the Desert and Infliction) but of pure Mercy, which knows no other Bounds besides the Will of him that shews it. Neither can any thing be Assigned that can possibly put to an end to this Happy Life; since God, who promises, will not; Man, enjoying it will be Unwilling, and missing of it will be Unable to effect it; The Devil is long since banish'd that State; Sin is for ever excluded it; and Death there swallowed up in Victory.* Besides, ^{1 Cor. 15.} that it would neither *give, nor be Life*, were it not thus *Eternal*; forasmuch as it would lose the Force and Energy of encouraging our Endeavours after it, and cast an Aspersions of bitterness upon all the Delight of our Possession of it. For being Spiritual and as yet Invisible it attracts but faintly and at a Distance, and unless there were somewhat in the Duration to enhance the Value, and to be offered in commutation, and to reward the Patience of the present Self-Denial, Heaven it self would be look'd on jealously, as a project to deprive us of our Present Portion, and to cheat us of our Possessions. And might we suspect that it might ever be lost, we could not enjoy one Moments Repose therein, but the more transcendent the Felicity, the more pungent the fear of parting with it, tho' at never so great a Distance. Therefore hath the Almighty and Wise God so ordered Things; that the vain and empty Delights of this World should be only Temporary and Transient, But that the Great and Substantial Enjoyments of the other World should be as lasting as they are Excellent. And, therefore Heaven as it is an

Exceeding, so it is an *Eternal Weight of Glory*. Where the *Revolutions of the Heavens and Ages* shall be under our Feet, and never either alter or conclude our Happiness. Where *Time*, like *Fire*, having destroy'd whatever it could Prey on, shall die it self and go out into *Eternity*, so that after Millions of Ages in this State, we shall be as far from the End thereof, as the very first Moment of our Entrance thereinto.

O most desirable *Life*! O vast *Eternity*! How dost thou swallow up our Thoughts, and entertain us at once with Delight and Amazement! *Never, Never!* is the killing Decree that breaks the Hearts of the Wicked, *Departed into Everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. *Ever, Ever!* the transporting Word that gives *Life* to the Blessed, *Inheriting the Kingdom prepared for them from the Foundation of the World*. This is it makes Heaven it self. And there our *Life* will be Happy indeed, because such a *Life Eternal*! And now I am come to my remaining Particular. And hence shall

8. Lastly, *Put you in Mind of the Influence this may reasonably be expected to have upon us*; Being a Profitable as well as Delightful Consideration, tending to beget and nourish in us all *Christian Graces*; Particularly

Compassion to Sinners. 1. *Compassion to Sinners*: Who hence appear to need it; as exposing themselves to so great *Misery*, as the loss of such a *Life of Happiness* imports. For now we cannot but be more sensible of this part of the *Infernal Torments*, and confess it to be *Hell* enough to miss of *Heaven*. And therefore how can our Hearts but ache and yearn over the *Miserable Circumstances of Wicked Men*, whose loss is so inexpressibly and insupportably great? And how ready and earnest should this make

Its Influence of us
70

us all to warn them hereof; and do all in our Power to save them from such an Evil? Surely their Loss is too Considerable, to be unconcern'd for them; and the more we understand of *Heaven*, the more Cause shall we perceive to be concern'd for their Loss of it.

2. *Humiliation of our selves*; Who so infinitely fall short, after all the best of our Performances, of deserving such a vast Reward for any *Righteousness* of ours. For if we remember what *Heaven* is, we cannot but confess our Inability to pay the Price thereof, and abhor the Thoughts that conceit it may be *Merited*. For no finite Endeavours can be Proportionate or Equivalent to an Infinite Reward; Which tho' it may encourage our Endeavours, yet must it never make us conceited of them. Eternal Life can be no other than the mere Gift of God; for which *He* only, and not *We* are to be magnified; And for which, tho' we are encouraged to do all we can, yet are we discourag'd from depending upon any Thing we do to obtain it. *Not unto us, O Lord! Not unto us! but unto thy Name* (the greatness of thy *Mercy*, not any Thing of our *Merit*) be the Praise? And therefore, let this also excite in us

3. *Our Devoutest Praise and Adoration of the Divine Bounty*; In designing so transcendent a Felicity for so worthless Creatures: Even for *Fallen Men*; who had abused and forfeited all Favour, and incurr'd the highest Displeasure; and must have acknowledg'd himself more *Happy* than he deserved, had he only not been doom'd to be Necessarily *Miserable*. And therefore to be prefer'd the utmost *Happiness* (a Favour deny'd to an higher Rank of Creatures, the Angelical Nature, that no less needed, and might more deserve, and better requite it) is surely such an amazing In-

stance of Kindness, as must constrain us to admire and own and Love it, and in devout wonder, cry out, *O the Height, and Depth, and Breadth of the Power and Goodness of God! Lord what is Man, that thou hast been thus mindful of him; Or we the sinful Children of Men, that thou shouldest thus regard us! Thou hast already made us little lower than the Angels; But designest, we see (when thou shalt Crown us with such amazing Glory and Honour) to advance us even above their Rank; tho not to the lessening their Dignity, yet greatly to the extolling of God's Love in Man's Happiness! And this, further, therefore calls for*

Obedience.

4. *Sincere and Universal Obedience; which is both engaged and encouraged by such a Motive: It neither being for nought that we serve God; nor for so little as we are bid elsewhere; or what will not abundantly recompence whatever we can do, or is required from us. Such a Life Eternal deserves every way the Service of this Temporal Life. Which if we duly Believe and Consider, will necessarily accuse our Sloath, condemn our Folly, inflame our Affections, and make us all Life and Spirit and Wing, and (if any Thing will) swell our Resolutions, and confirm our Purposes of Obedience, and every way engage us to have our Fruit unto Holiness, since our end will be this Life Everlasting. Nor does this less support in us*

Patience.

5. *Intire and Chearful Patience; to Suffer, as well as Do, any thing for Heaven; which is sufficient to reconcile us both to the Hardships of Religion, and Crosses of the World, For as Ample Rewards will make Difficulties easy; so are they not wont to be expected without some Difficulty. Heaven is not fit to be prostituted to the Soft and Lazy. And if Men will take Pains for any thing, no-*

thing is more able to recompence them; for which no Pains can be too much, or will ever be Repented of; it being what will make amends for all. And, in the mean time, what we want of *Enjoyment*, we have abundantly made up to us in *Hope*; who are contending for a better *Life*, and know we shall change this very shortly, and are the less concern'd how it is with us now, because we know it will be so well with us every way then. For which Cause (as the *Apostle* says) we faint not ^{2Cor 4.16} while we look not at the Things which are seen; but at the Things which are not seen; for the Things which are seen are Temporal, but the Things which are not seen are Eternal. A Man with Heaven in his Eye, will not be dismayed at any Hardship or Sufferings; *Reckoning*, also with the *Apostle*, that the Sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the *Glo-* Rom. 8.18 *ry* which shall be revealed. The incomparably greater Good of the next Life ought thus to weigh down with us all the Evils of this Life; and enable us not only to bear its Calamities, but further to contemn its Temptations; and to win our Affections from it, as well as reconcile our Patience to it. And therefore again, Hence we learn,

6. *Heavenly Mindedness*: so as to set our Affections ^{Heavenly} on (according to the *Apostles* Exhortation) ^{Minded-} on Things above, not on Things on Earth: There being ^{ness.} nothing in the Present Life, comparable to the Happiness of Life Eternal; And there being every thing in this to make up the Deficiencies of that. For as 'tis with the Sufferings, so is it with the Enjoyments of this present time, they are neither of them worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed. And were the World much better than it is, yet since Heaven is, confessedly, so far beyond it, our Minds ought to be taken up ^{most}

most therewith, as what is best for us, and will most stand us in stead, and be abundantly sufficient when all other our Enjoyments shall fail us: For as nothing in the World can recompence to us the loss of Heaven, so will the Gain of this make amends for all our other Losses; And having such a *Life Eternal* in our View, it may suffice, whatever becomes of us in our present *Temporal Life*. For 'tis *that*, and not *this* that determines us finally *Happy* or *Miserable*. Therefore as our Concern for *the one*, should not suffer us to be at leisure to be so very much solicitous for *the other*; so should our incomparably greater Interest engage all our Time and Powers, and Longings for it self; And our *Circumstances on Earth* seem less to us, because of our *Hopes of Heaven*, which can never be made too much of by us. The *World*, whate'er we conceit it, signifying just nothing to us, who must so very shortly (neither know we how soon) be removed quite out of it; and *Life Eternal* being the happiest State we can desire to be placed in, deserving and engaging our chief Regard. *Heaven* is all we want, and should be what we most Mind. The World hath nothing like it, and it is enough of it self. It becomes us therefore, as to be more Indifferent towards *the one*, so to be more solicitous for *the other*. And this then, finally, will dispose us with

Courage to
Die

7. Lastly, *Courage to Die*. Which is the most terrible Thing to Nature; and which nothing can ever reasonably reconcile it to, but the *Belief* and *Hopes* of this *Life Eternal*. For, when we go hence (as most certainly we must) what will become of us, if we miss of *Heaven*? Or what can there be to fear in removing to such a State? What,

What, tho the Passage seem Dark and Difficult? It is but the *Passage*; which will quickly be over, whate'er it is. Neither is it to be our Abode; or what concerns us, any further than as it leads us right or wrong; and which we must thro, whether it be to *Heaven* or *Hell*. And which therefore can be no other to us; than just the State is it leads us to; and can have nothing in it to dismay us in our Way to Everlasting Bliss; which we should long to be at, thro whatever Terrors and Dangers; as not being to be frighted at any thing in our Way to such Felicity; it being *Heaven* and not *Death* that we are to be eternally concerned with.

And if then a Philosophical Discourse from *Socrates*, of the Soul's Immortality, is reported to have so animated an *Heathen* above the Fear of Cleombrotus. Dying, as immediately to leap into the Sea, that he might presently be in that State; What a perfect Consolation may the *Christian's* Belief of a Divine Revelation, and well-grounded Hope on a sure Promise, be reasonably supposed to yield him? And, we know, times hath been, when this hath given *Life* in the midst of *Death*, and perfect ease amidst the most exquisite Torments, and welcom'd its Terrors with Gladness and Joy, to a whole Cloud of *Winnings* and Glorious Martyrs, Heb. 12. 2. who looking unto *Jesus*, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, were enabled to do as he did, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God. And the same Faith and Hope will prove the same to us; So that the more we believe and secure *Heaven*, the less terrible will *Death* appear to us. It not being so much

much Mens fearing to Die, as their fearing what will then become of them, which gives them Disturbance.

The Design of all therefore is to excite us to make sure of *Heaven*; and so to *Believe* the *Life Everlasting*, as to shun its endless *Punishments* and secure its *Life Eternal*. And then we shall have nothing to fear, nor any Thing more to regard; But shall long for, and welcome the Day that will conclude this, and begin that happy State.

O Blessed Time! When these Bands, which tye me down to this distant World, shall burst asunder, and let me mount whither my *Faith* and *Hope* lead me! When I shall retire from the dull and dangerous Converse of Mortals, to the *general Assembly* of the most perfect Society in Heaven! When I shall consummate my best Wishes; be eas'd of all my Pain; resolv'd of all my Doubts; purg'd from all my Sins; freed from all my Fears; be happy beyond my Hopes; and secured against all Chance and Change! When I shall see and resemble *God*; and be what he would have me; and what I shall like to be; and shall never be otherwise! When I shall be immediately *with the Lord*, and behold his *Glory*, and share with him in it! When -- what shall I say more, of what we must yet know but in part, but must Die to know all? Happy that Hour that shall Inform me! Lord

Psal. 39.7. what wait I for? my Hope is in thee! I expect, nor do I desire to avoid the Tidings of my Dissolution, as necessary to my Happiness as Heaven. I bless God, that he hath not doom'd me to an Everlasting Imprisonment within these Close and Clayie Walls of Corruption, wherein I have already been so long shut up from beholding his Face and Glory. I have Consider'd, and have my

Eye

Eye and Heart continually fix'd on the Future Life, much more desirable because *Eternal*; And I am not, methinks, so fearful or loath to change this for it. I will desire to *Live*, but till God would have me *Die*; And then I would do it without Fear or Grudging. I will not take much Care whether my Life be Long or Short at present. If *short*, the sooner will the Evils of it end, the sooner will it commence Happy and *Eternal*. But if my Years be many, so that my Head wax Gray, and my Limbs Feeble, even the long Expectation of my Happiness shall make my Joy more welcome, and *Death* less feared; since I must at last depend upon its Help to remove me thereto. In the mean while then, I will get ready for its Approach, and reconcile my self to its harsh Appearance. I will set my little House in order, and expect his Admittance, which I shall oppose in vain; And undisturbed sit me down, chaunting out a *Requiem* to my Soul, a *Nunc Dimittis* to my Spirit: *Lord now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy Word!* Let my Body and Soul burst a sunder without any Noise or Disorder; the one be laid down in Silence in the Dust; the other ascend into the Arms of my Saviour; and both meet in a *Joyful and Glorious Resurrection*, and by him be advanced to this *Life Eternal*; *Receiving the end of my Faith*, thus in what Concludes and Crowns this *Apostolick Creed!*

Lu. 2. 29.

1 Pet. 1. 9.

Grant this, O our Heavenly Father, for his sake!
Amen! So be it!

SER-

SERMON XXI.

ON THE

DECALOGUE.

Exod. xx. 1, 3.

And God spake all these Words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage.

THE Rule of Faith in the Articles of the Creed having been considered, The Rule of Obedience in God's Holy Will and Commandments (to which also we vowed in the Third and last Part of our Baptismal Promise) next follows to be spoken to. To which these Words of the Text, being Introductory, offer to our Consideration the following Particulars, conducing to our more profitable Understanding the same.

- I. The Law it self; termed here *All these Words.*
- II. The Legislator; Which is God, that spake all these Words.

III. The

III. The *Subjects* to whom they were spoke, obliged by them; here intimated to be those whom God had brought out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage; and whose God he styles himself peculiarly to be.

IV. The *Sanction* of this Law, or Obligation upon such to observe and receive what is here spoke, by reason of this great Mercy and Important Relation of God to them.

V. The remarkable *Circumstances of Promulgation*; To which the Particle of Connexion [*And*] in the beginning of the *Text* doth refer our Inquiry, described in the Relation preceding.

VI. The *Method and Disposition* of all *These Words*, wherein God spoke them. And,

VII. Lastly, The *Rules* whereby we ought to Govern our Understanding, in conceiving of their full Import and Extent.

A brief Inspection into these Particulars will surely promote our Capacity for a more ready Understanding what will be said concerning the following Precepts; Any whereof cannot well be here omitted by us, without great Mutilation of our succeeding Discourses. I begin therefore with the First, which is,

I. *The Law it self.* Here termed *All these Words*. [*All*] without Distinction or Exception proceeding from the same Authority and in the same Manner; And *All* therefore exacting a like Observance [*These*] even the very same that are introduced by this *Preface*, being faithfully recorded and summarily comprised in [*Words*] or sententious Commands, best besitting Divine Majesty, and accommodated to the Weakness of Humane

The Decalogue.

Me-

Bishop of
London
Derry.

Exod. 34.
28.
Deut 10.2

Memory. And (as one well observes) considering the Paucity here of the Expressions, and yet the Copiousness and Variety of the Matter contained in them, one must needs acknowledge not only their Authority, but even the Skill and Art to be Divine, in reducing the whole Duty of Man to so brief a Compendium. The whole Bible, which is the Statute Book of God's Kingdom, being but a Commentary on these few *Words* enlarged by *Exhortations, Threats, Promises and Examples*. So that this System of Laws, tho' *Words* for Brevity, yet is the Marrow of Divine Revelation and Religion for Sense and Matter. Here is *All* in a *Word*. And which therefore in the *Pentateuch* (or those Five Books ascribed to *Moses*) are called the *Ten Words* or *Ten Things*, (for so the *Hebrew* and *Greek* signify thereby both *Words* and *Things*. Whence also it is called the *Decalogue*, which (according to its Etymology) strictly signifies *Ten Words*; the number of these Laws which are *Words of Authority*, binding to due Obedience. Wherefore the *Latins* are observed to term *Words* of this kind, *Lex*, a Law, a *Ligando*, from their binding Nature: *A Law* being nothing else but a *Rule for Action* imposed by a Superiour Authority. Which accordingly receives its Denomination from the Power Commanding: If Man, then it is called an *Humane Law*; If God, then a *Divine Law*. And to know to which kind of *Laws* we are to refer these *Words*, consider we

The Legis-
lator.

II. *The Legislator*, or Person speaking all these *Words*; which is *God*, and that most immediately, as it were from his own Mouth; thereby imparting the Nature and Force of a *Divine Law* thereto, that obligeth to the highest Regard and Obedience,

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ence, proceeding from the most Sovereign Unquestionable and Uncontroulable Authority.

Now the Laws of God are commonly distinguished into two Kinds, viz. either *Natural* or *Positive*.

The *Natural Laws* of God are such as are Ground-^{Natural}ed upon Natural Principles, and can be searched ^{Röm. 2. 14} by them; whereby Men are a Law unto themselves, which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts; their Consciences also bearing Witness, and their Thoughts in the mean while accusing or else excusing one another. The *Positive Laws* of God are such as have no other, at least visible, Foundation than the meer good Pleasure of God; and are therefore to be known only by Revelation from himself. And tho the Matter of some Positive Laws be the very same with that of the Law of Nature, yet as that Matter is a part of those Precepts which we call Positive, it is founded upon the meer Good Pleasure of God, and consequently knowable to us, not by their own Inward Light, but by such outward Means as God is pleased to manifest them by. And thus we are to observe that this System of Precepts, tho knowable by the Light of Nature, as to the Substance of it, (for which Reason it is commonly called the *Natural Law*) yet as this was part of the Law given in Mount Sinai, it depended upon the alone Good Will and Pleasure of God, who there spake all these Words, and which consequently could not have been known, but by his own publick Declaration and those Writings which have transmitted them unto us, and which also therefore are *Positive Laws*.

Now the *Positive Laws* of God are again distinguished into two sorts, viz. Either such as were ^{Positive} Revealed to Man in the State of Innocency or since ^{Law} his

D. Tow.
erson

his Fall from it. In the State of Innocency the only Positive Law God laid upon Man, was that he *should not eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*; and which was then given him not as a Supplement of *Natures Law*, which needed it not, but that God might thereby have a firmer Proof of Mans Obedience to himself. For (as one gives an Account hereof) the Law of Nature containing such things as ought in Reason to be done, tho there were no Command of God prescribing them, our Obedience thereto might proceed rather from Compliance with our own Reason than with his Command who gave it: But giving a Law, the Matter whereof had nothing to Command it, but the Authority of him who gave it, Obedience thereto could proceed from no other Consideration, and that Consequently must be the surest Proof of our Obedience. The same is to be said, in some Measure, of God's making *Positive Laws* concerning those Things which we before prescribed by that of *Nature*; which, because they exact our Obedience upon the Score of his Authority that gave them, we cannot satisfy but by having a principal Regard to his Command who imposed them upon us. Now this Law being laid upon Adam as he was the Representative of all Mankind (as appears from the *Scriptures* charging the Guilt of it upon all that descended from his Loyns) it must be supposed to have been Obligatory to us; and must consequently so far concern us as to oblige us to repent of the Breach of it. As for the *Positive Laws* given to Man since the Fall, they are, by some, distinguished to be either such as Preceded the Deluge (as that of the Womans being Subject to her Husband, and of Man's Laboriousness) or such as follow the Deluge, which were given

Cen. 3. 16.

19.

Gen. 4. 5. & 6.

given either to *Noah* and his Sons (as the Prohibition of *Murder*, and of eating *Flesh with the Life or Blood thereof*) obliging all their Descendents, inasmuch as they also were the Representatives of Mankind; Or they were given to *Moses*, by whom the *Law*, in a more peculiar and eminent manner is said to come: And whose Laws are reckoned to be of these *Three Sorts*. 1. Such as were *Judicial*. Which ordered all Matters concerning the Civil Government of that Nation which God Governed by him. 2. *Ceremonial*. Which ordered the Circumstances of the *Jewish Religion*. And, 3. *Moral*. Which ordered the Manners of Men, by the Rules of Piety, Righteousness and Sobriety. The *Jews* had the first sort of these Laws given them as a *State*, the Second as a *Church*, but the Last as *Men*, or God's Rational Creatures. And these are the *Laws* concerned in this *System* of Precepts now under Consideration; Which therefore we term the *Moral Law*. So that, upon the whole we now see that these Words which God Spoke [or Declared by Revelation] are the *Natural or Moral Positive Law* of God, given since the *Fall and Deluge*, in the Time of *Moses*. Wherein, also, that we may know who are concern'd, proceed we to Consider now

III. The Subjects to whom they were Spoke, obliged *How Obliged* by them; intimated in the Text to be those whose God the Lord peculiarly then was [*I am the Lord* *thy God*] and whom he had miraculously, brought out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage; Both which do manifestly shew us that these Words or Laws were first directed to the *Jews*, and that they were the Persons primarily concerned therein. And, in what Manner, or by what Means, their

their Laws should ever come to oblige Us, seems sufficiently explicable in the following Propositions.

1. That no Jewish or Mosaical Law, whatsoever, formally as such, can in it self concern us Christians: So that if any Part of such Law now binds us (as we own it does) it is not because it was their Law, but upon some other accidental Account.

2. That the Ceremonial Part of the Jewish Law doth upon no Account oblige any one now: Being never intended for the Gentiles and at last abrogated to the Jews, as Useless to all, since Christ hath fulfill'd what it foreshew'd, and hath introduced a different and better Dispensation, supplying the want of those Helps by the more liberal Effusion of his Holy Spirit.

3. That the Judicial Law of Moses, hath also lost now its Sanction. The Secular Part of it dying with that Common-wealth, and the Religious Part of it ceasing with the Temple. And tho the Instances of this Law proceeding from the wisest Lawgiver, are Good Guides to Princes and Commonwealths, where the same Reasons are applicable, in like Circumstances of Things, and in equal Capacities of Subjects, yet they are wholly without Obligation, leaving Governours at Liberty, who are tyed up only with Rules and Analogies of the Christian Law.

4. That yet the Moral Jewish Laws, of which these Ten Commandments as was said, are a System, do equally oblige every Christian, as well as they do the Jews to observe them. They do not oblige Christians considered as the Jewish Covenant: Both because that Race is alien, and that Covenant changed for a better (even the Covenant of Grace) and the Law was intended for the Jews alone, while the Church

Heb. 8. 6.

ed for a better (even the Covenant of Grace) and the Law was intended for the Jews alone, while the Church

Church

Church was confined to *Palestine*; But as there was to be a time, when all Nations should flow unto it, so *Iſa. 2. 2.* was the Law proportionably to extend its Dominion, and comprehend those *New Comers* as well its *Ancient Subjects*, whence we find the *Apostles* pressing the *Gentile Christians* to the observance of *Eph. 6. 1.* these *Jewish Precepts*; and affirming that *whatsoever* *Rom. 15. 4.* Things were written aforetime, were written for our Learning, that we through *Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures* might have *Hope*. Both the *Jews Precepts* of their Law, and *God's Mercies and Judgments* upon them, being intended for the Direction of all People, and These designed to inforce Those. Accordingly therefore (which excludes all Doubt of our Obligation thereby) it was adopted by our Saviour into his Law, and by him both confirm'd and fulfilled; *Christianity* being nothing else than *Morality* truly expounded and advanced. And as there is no Commandment in this System of the *Jewish Moral Law*, but what is *Christian*, so is there no *Christian Duty* but what may be reduceable to this System of *Morality*. For all these Words that God here spake to his People, however according to their immediate and direct Sense seeming peculiar to them, yet they may in a larger, or in a Myſterious and Spiritual Meaning, at least according to good Analogy or Parity of Reason, concern us also: Obliging us, if not by direct Authority in punctual Manner to the very same Thing, yet as a signification of God's Pleasure and Approbation to somewhat answerable and like thereto. And in like manner, those *Christian Duties* enjoyn'd by Christ, are either all, or the greater part of them, as to the mian, either plainly express'd or closely insinuated in these Words. And therefore our

Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, which is esteem'd the System of Christianity, is plainly a Comment on this System of Morality; Directly speaking the Words to us, that were Primarily spoken to the Jews, and wherein therefore Christians are no less concern'd as the Subjects obliged by them; And therefore concerned also to consider (as was proposed)

Its Obligation from,

IV. *The Sanction of this Law, or Obligation here urged to observe and receive these Words spake, which is grounded on God's Authority, and Providential Mercy.*

The Authority of the Lawgiver.

I. *The Authority of the Lawgiver, as is Proper and Usual, here Ushers in these Laws, by Proclaiming his Name and Relation.*

The Name Prefixed is the Lord, the very Jehovah, I am, who under this Appellation was made known to, and worshipped by, and Covenanted with their Forefathers; who is the only true God, of Authority to Command, able to Reward and Punish, and whose we and all our Powers and Capacities are; And whom therefore to Obey, upon all accounts of Reason, Duty and Interest, is necessary; Every Word he speaks being stamp'd with Divinity.

The Relation mention'd is Peculiar; Proclaiming him to be the God of Israel; in Covenant with a People chosen and separated from the rest of the World; whom he had assumed under his own immediate Governance and Protection; depending on him, and vow'd intirely to his Service; Whose God he was, and to whom therefore he had a peculiar Right and Interest to give Laws. Especially, considering also,

2. *The*

2. *The Providential Mercy* to persuade Obedience, special to this People, and still fresh in Memory; Putting them in Mind of the *Misery* they had been once in, and were now delivered from, by the *Lord* their God, who brought them out of the *Land of Egypt*, out of the *House of Bondage*. Great Mercies oblige to ready Obedience. Nor is it any Worth in the Persons God's Mercies are placed on, but only in the *Kindness* they proceed from that renders a Mercy Great. Whence not only this Particular Personal Mercy of God to the *Jews* mentioned in the Text, but every kind Dispensation of Providence to any other Man, is an Obligation to Obedience; Especially the *Publick Mercies* of a People, and the remembrance of that more particularly which is most sensibly the Greatest. And therefore as we are to take our selves concerned in the *Law*, so also even in its *Sanction*, equally with the *Jews*, upon whom it is bound by the same Obligation from God's *Authority* and *Kindness*. And tho we are not the People God did first Promulge these Laws to, nor whom he did literally bring up out of the *Land of Egypt* out of the *House of Bondage*; yet we are no less his People, whom he hath adopted into the same Relation to himself, and to whom he hath vouchsafed as great or greater Deliverance, and to whose Obedience he hath no less right. And therefore that we also might work our Hearts to a more ready and willing Obedience to the Divine Laws, we have this *Preface* recorded as the sure Foundation, whereon they stand, by the Application whereof to our own Case, we might be swayed thro *Fear* and *Love* to *Submission* and *Gratitude*.

For the Lord *Jehovah* is such no less to us *Christians*, than he was to the *Jews*. *He is the same Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever*; Not only Lord, neither in *Degree* nor *Nature* our equal, the only *True, Eternal, and Almighty* God; the essential Author, Lord and Governour of all Things; the Consideration of whose Authority and Majesty ought to prostrate us before him. But he is also our God, in a new and better Covenant with us; established on better Promises having obliged us by granting nobler Priviledges, and dispensing more excellent Benefits; delivering from a worse Bondage to a more happy State, who as the Apostle expresseth it, hath delivered us from the Power of Darknes, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son. And therefore to us these Words God now speaks in an higher strain, exacting justly a more punctual and accurate Obedience, by how much greater his Mercy to us is under the Gospel, than it was to his People under the Law.

And yet to raise our esteem and regard further for them, God hath therefore, not only thus back'd them by the most convincing Considerations of his Authority and Kindness, but so circumstantiated their first promulgation, as befeemed the Majesty of the Legislator, and the great Reformation they were designed to effect. And this is assigned for our next General Consideration of these Introductory Words to the Ten Commandments; VIZ.

The Circumstances of its Promulgation, as to

V. The Remarkable Circumstances of Promulgation. To which the Particle of Connexion [And] in the Front of the Text doth refer our Inquiry, as being described in the preceding and subsequent Relation. [And] God spake, i. e. After the Children

dren of *Israel* were at such a Time, in such a Place, and in such a Manner disposed by the Conduct and Ministry of *Moses*, God delivered the following System of Laws to them. All which *Circumstances* are recorded as well as the *Law*; and are therefore also intended to be *Instructive*; to which our Notice is referr'd by this Particle [*And*] which connecteth this with the foregoing Chapter, the which we must consult for our Information concerning the notable Circumstances of this Promulgation; and wherein we have Recorded

1. *The Time when God spake all these Words.* Which was in the Third Month, when the Children of *Israel* were gone forth out of the Land of *Egypt*, and which the best Chronological Computations have fixed to about Two Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Years after the Creation, and consequently, Eight Hundred and Four Years after the Flood, Two Hundred and Twenty Years after *Jacob's* coming to his Son *Joseph* into *Egypt*, just Fifty Days after the *Israelites* eating the Passover in *Egypt*, and almost One Thousand Five Hundred before Christ, and so above Three Thousand Years before our Days. Till when the *Law of Nature*, (supplied in many Particulars by *Tradition*, and especial *Revelations*) was the standing Rule for Obedience, and in every Nation, he that feared God and wrought Righteousness was accepted by him, as now. But through the prevalency of Corruption, the World being totally degenerated, God now first selects to himself a *National Church* in the World, to which he prescribes *Positive Laws*, for the Security of the Knowledge and Worship of the true God. And when the World could no longer be without, and was most ripe to receive it, then in its proper Season was the Law given.

Time.
Exod. 19.1

Act. 10.35

2. The

Place.

Exod. 19.

1, 2.

2. *The Place where it was given, we also read, was in the Wilderness of Sinai, even before the Mount.* Retirement and Solitude being the proper Stage for Discovery of the Mind and Will of God, which the Noise and Hurry of the Publick incapacitate for: Therefore God here first withdraws his People into the Desert, before he promulgeth his Laws to them. Which he did from a *Mount*, only perhaps for the remarkableness of the Place, or Advantage of the Congregations beholding the Solemnity, or finally as (some will have it) prefiguring our *Saviours* Sermon in the Mount, that was to expound and improve the Law.

Preparation.

Exod. 19.

from v. 3.

to 12.

3. *God Prepares the People, by renewing with them a Covenant, and enjoyning them a Typical Cleansing, before he spake these Words unto them; Intimating Man's unsitness to appear before God, either in his Ordinances here, or in Heaven hereafter, without some serious Preparation.*

Reverence.

—19, 13.

4. *The People are obliged to a due distance from the Holy Mount; by its being fenced in, and they prohibited so much as to touch it, under the Penalty even of Death. The Place wherever God is pleased to manifest himself becoming (at least, while he does so) venerable and awful; whose Majesty, Rash and Presumptuous Approaches no way become.*

Terror.

—16, to the

end of the

Chapter.

5. *This Law was deliver'd in a terrible Manner; accompany'd with Thunders and Lightnings, and Earthquakes, and Fire, and Darknes, to the Terror not only of the Multitude, but of Moses himself, who did exceedingly fear and quake. God accompanying his own Commands with his Majesty, to add to them Authority, and to forewarn Men of the Terror he will come with to Judge according to this Law, which was so terrible even in its Promulgation.*

Heb. 12.

21.

6. Thre

6. Thro these Terrors, the People flee to the Medi- *Driving to*
 ation of Moses. To whom they said, speak thou *Mediation.*
 with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with *Exod. 29.*
 us, lest we die. The Severity and Terrors of the *19.*

Law are intended to drive us unto Christ; being in it self, as it is dispensed to us only from God, the Ministration of Death and Condemnation, but in the hand of our Mediator we may hear and observe it, and obtain Eternal Life, not for, but thro our Obedience to it.

7. For the Security of the Law, God wrote it *Security.*
 himself on Tables of Stone twice (the first Writing being defaced by Moses's breaking the Stones) and ordered it to be laid up in the Ark. From which Circumstances also is significantly enough infer'd an Admonishment of the Stoniness of Men's Hearts, that only the Finger of God can make any Impression of his Laws upon them; And of their Depravity which were esteemed more unfit to be trusted therewith than a Stone. Whereon, in like manner, as on the Tables, God twice writes his Law; new stamping by *Regeneration* those broken Characters thereof, which he had fairly engraven by *Creation* in a State of Righteousness and Knowledge, obliterated by the Fall; which Law now only is to be kept and observed in Christ our Ark, who fulfilled all Righteousness; and whose compleat Obedience supplies all our Imperfections and Defects.

8. Lastly, The Shining of Moses's Face that necessitated his covering the same while he was among the People with a veil, is also a Circumstance not to be pass'd unregarded, because so particularly insisted on by St. Paul, and its Significance applied to the Brightness of the Gospel veil'd under the Law; which now being stripp'd is able *Shining of*
Moses's
Face.
2 Cor. 3. 13
14, 15, 16.

to make the Face of every sincere *Christian* shine with a Divine Lustre reflected from the Presence of God upon him in his near Approaches to, and Spiritual Converses with him.

Such Light and Instruction may we derive from such Notices of even the *Circumstances* of the Laws Promulgation, to which the Conjunctive Particle ushering in the *Text* refers us. Consider we now,

Its Method
as to Num-
ber and

Exod. 34.
28.
Order.

VI. *The Method, Disposition and Import of these Words wherein God spake them.* Concerning which nothing need to have been said, had not too much been by others already said. For tho none have presumed to question the *Number* of these Commandments, which God himself hath expressly determin'd to be *Ten*; yet hath their Disposition been strangely controverted. Some making this *Preface* to the Commandments, to be the *First* Commandment, reading Imparatively what is Declarative and Assertative not distinguishing the *Second*, and making the *Seventh* the *Sixth*, and the *Sixth* the *Eighth* in order. And yet it little Matters, because it tends not to Piety, how we reckon the *Order* of these Commandments, so long as we own all that God hath spoken in them, and are duly careful to observe them. But we justly condemn and dissent from those, that out of a Sacrilegious and Idolatrous Design, endeavour to conceal the Matter, and confound the Number of them, as some notoriously Do. Who, tho with us, they do divide this *System* into *Two Tables* or Parts, the one containing Duties respecting *God*; the other *Man*; yet contrary to both Truth and Us, they generally hold that there are but *Three* Commandments in the *First Table*, and therefore make out *Seven* in the *Second*: To compleat which Number

as

as they joyn the *First* and *Second* into one, so they divide the *Tenth* into Two; one forbidding the *Coveting of our Neighbours Wife*, the other of *any other of his Possessions*, contrary to the current of *Antiquity*, and *Order* observed in the *Holy Scripture*; which indifferently placing our *Neighbours Wife*, and his *House* before each other, shews them to belong both to one Precept.

Exod. 20.
17. compared with
Deut. 5. 21

Sticking therefore to the *Hebrew Verity*, and observing the *Scripture Disposition* and *Method*, we attribute *Four Commandments* to the *First Table*, and *Six* to the *Second*. The *First* concerning our *Piety towards God*, the other our *Charity towards our Neighbour*. God seeming hereby to put a *Distance* between himself and us; setting us (as One expresses it) at another *Table* from himself, as infinitely *Inferiour* to him; Minding us of the *Preference* due to him, whose *Glory* with all humble *Reverence* ought to be our *End*, in all our *Actions*; *God* being to be served never for *Man's Sake*, but *Man* always for *God's Sake*; To whom we are obliged in the first place; and on whose *Table* we must attend most, because the *First*; yet so as not to neglect the *Other*, which are the *Two Great Commandments* on which, our *Saviour* hath told us, hang all the *Law* and the *Prophets*.

Divisions

Mat. 23.
40.

The *Four Commandments* of the *First Table* prescribe thus; The *First*, the *Object of Worship*, together with all *Acts of Inward Natural Worship*, *Thou shalt not have no other Gods but me*. The *Second*, The *Matter* of all outward Instituted *Worship*, together with the *Sanction* hereof; *Thou shalt not make to thy self any Graven Image, &c. For I the Lord thy God am a Jealous God, &c.* The *Third*, the *Manner of Worship*, with the *Sanction* likewise thereof, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God*.

Matter.

God

God in Vain, for the Lord will not hold him Guiltless, that taketh his Name in Vain. And the Fourth, the Time of our Solemn Worship; Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day, &c.

As to the Six Commandments of the Second Table; In the Fifth, are Prescribed the Duties of our several Relations; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, &c. In the Sixth is forbid all Injury against our Neighbours Life; Thou shalt do no Murder: In the Seventh, Against his Chastity; Thou shalt not commit Adultery: In the Eighth, against his Goods; Thou shalt not steal: In the Ninth, against his Good Name; Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour: And in the Tenth and Last (as Comprehensive and Recapitulatory of the rest) is forbid all Injury, also, even in Thought and Desire against our Neighbour; Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbours House, &c.

This is the Order and Summ of this excellent System of the Moral Law. Which, that we may rightly apprehend, and have a due Sense of its full Import and Meaning, it will also be necessary here, before we descend to treat particularly on the Words of the Decalogue, to speak to what was assigned for our last General Head; which is

Rule of
Expound-
ing it.

VII. Lastly, The Consideration of such Measures and Rules, whereby we are to proceed in arriving to the full Sense and Meaning of these several Precepts or Words, which God thus spoke, Primarily to the Jews; and Secondly, and in a higher Pitch, and under a stricter eye to all Christians. To this end these Two Things are to be manifested. 1. That more is Comprehended in these Ten Commandments than is express'd. And, 2. By Rules therefore, they must be interpreted, to attain their full Import.

1. More

1. *More is comprehended in these Ten Commandments than is express'd.* Not only must all that which is expressed be supposed to be comprehended in them, but what is either Implied in, or necessarily Deducible from them; For they are not to be considered Literally as, *Ten Words*; but in a more ample and extensive Notion, as the Common Heads of all *Moral Duties* towards God and Man, to be explicated according to the Illustrations and Commentaries of the *Prophets*, and the Enlargements of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*; in which Capacity, as there is no doubt but that we ought to look upon them, so 'tis evidently certain they contain more than is expressed in their letter. And tho the *Decalogue* does not mention each Particular Duty in the *Gospel*, yet it doth command Obedience to all that were or shall be specified; so that what is not a Duty from the General Precept till specified in the *Gospel*, being once a Duty, the neglect of it is a Sin against the *Decalogue*. All the Particular Duties, therefore, dispersed in the *Holy Scripture*, tho not expressly mention'd in any one of the *Ten Commandments*, yet are reducible to some one or more of them, as comprehending that *Love to God and our Neighbour*, that is the sum of all the *Law and the Prophets*. And therefore to the right and genuine Interpretation of this *Law*, we must take in whatsoever the *Prophets*, *Apostles*, or our Lord *Christ* himself have taught, as Comments and Expositions upon this Compendium, concerning *Moral Worship and Justice*. For which End are laid down

2. *Rules and Measures whereby to proceed in the Interpretation hereof*, to enable us to apprehend what more is contained than express'd herein. Such are usually these.

1. That

1. *That the Negative in every Commandment doth include the Affirmative, and the Affirmative the Negative: Or that the Contrary to that is Forbidden is always Commanded, and the Contrary to what is Commanded is necessarily Forbidden.* So that tho some, and that the most, of these Commandments seem satisfied with a bare restraint from Evil, and others with the sole pursuit of what is Good, yet are both the one and the other to be understood as obliging to both. Yet also with this Difference (which is therefore offered as another Rule for Interpreting them)

2. *That Affirmative Precepts are not so obliging, (tho as to the Habit, yet not) to the Act of Obedience, as the Negative are.* For Affirmative Commands, tho they oblige to Duty, yet not Always; as works of Mercy and the like, may be done on the Sabbath Day; and Obedience to God is to be preferr'd before Honour to a Superiour, when inconsistent with it. But the Negative Oblige to abstinence from All Sin, and Always; because it is never lawful to do Evil that Good may come thereof.

3. *That both the Affirmative and Negative Commands, where they seem to Command or Forbid only outward Acts, are yet to be Understood to reach the Inward Motives of the Spirit also.* Because the Law of God, who is a Spirit, must necessarily be like himself Spiritual; to whom the Affection is visible and due as the Action.

Rom. 7. 14

4. *That under the Grosser sort of Sins only, forbidden expressly, are contained also all the lesser ones of the same Species.* Yea,

5. *That not only the Sins here mentioned are forbidden, but all those things that lead to them: As likewise not only the Duties here expressed are under Command, but all those Means that naturally tend to them.* The reason

reason whereof is the inseparable Connexion between the *End* and its *Means*.

6. That where the *Relative* is only express'd, the *Correlative* is to be understood as equally concern'd in the *Duty Commanded*. Which is peculiar to the *Fifth Commandment*. As is the next.

7. That whatsoever is there annexed by way of *Promise*, tho more peculiarly concerning the *Jews*, does yet appertain, with some *Allowance*, to us *Christians* also.

8. That the *Commands* of the first *Table* are not to be kept for the sake of the *Second*, but those of the *Second* are to be kept for the sake of the *First*. Because *God* only is to be served for himself, and *Man* only for *God's* sake, which is the *Fountain* of all *Duty*, and what only distinguisheth *Obedience* to be *Genuine* from *Hypocrisy* or bare *Morality*.

9. That the *Commands* of the *First Table*, so far forth as they are purely *Moral* (and therefore only the *Fourth* excepted) supersede our *Obedience* to those of the *Second Table*, when inconsistent. Because *Regard* is to be had rather to *God* than *Man*; Upon which account it is, that *Preference* is to be given to *Works of Mercy* and *Necessity* that tend immediately to the *Honour* of *God*, before the *Observation* of the *Sabbath* that was *Instituted* for the *Mar. 2. 27.* sake of *Man*. Not that any *Duty* ought willingly to be omitted; only where all cannot be performed, those towards *God* are to be ever preferred by us: Tho the *Connexion* between all *God's* *Commandments* are so *Close* and *Intimate*, that they are always consistent, tho for a time necessitated to give *Place* and *Preference* one to another. And which therefore affords this further *Rule*.

10. *That whosoever breaketh one of these Commandments he is Guilty of all.* Not *Actually*, but *Virtually*, and *Interpretatively* by Violating the Authority upon which all are alike founded, and stand and fall together therewith. For any one Law wilfully broken offers Violence to that Authority which makes the Law, and renders one Sin a forfeiture of Obedience, which ought to be Universal, and a Rebellion against the whole Law, which is divested of its Sanction by one as well as several sorts of Sins.

11. Lastly, Be it also regarded, *That every Person is bound to be assistant to all others in their Observance of the Duties here Commanded, and to hinder them from the Sins here forbidden, so far as it lawfully lies in his Power.* Because the Law, which is not Particular but Universal, obligeth every One to make Obedience thereto as Universal as he can. And therefore not he is to be deemed to keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, or to walk in the same as he ought, that only intends to observe them himself, but scruples not to encourage or permit others to break or disregard them; but he only who does what he can to have them Religiously kept by all; Intending the Interest of the Law, the Honour of God, and Good of others, as well as his own Happiness thereby. Upon which Account it is that Joshua undertook not for himself only (that not being sufficient to answer his Obligation to God's Will) but for all under his Care and Power; *As for me and my House, said he, we will serve the Lord.* And under the Law it self it is accordingly expressly thus enjoined, *Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour and not suffer Sin upon him.*

And thus now having done with the *Preliminaries*, depending on this *Preface*, necessarily *Introductory* to the more immediate Understanding of the *Commandments* themselves; We may proceed the better capacitated thro the *Divine Conduct*, to make them the particular Arguments of our succeeding Discourses. Beseeching, in the mean time,

Almighty God, who alone can order the unruly Wills and Affections of sinful Men, to grant unto his People, that they may love the Thing which he commandeth, and desire that which he doth promise; that so among the sundry and manifold Changes of the World, our Hearts may surely there be fixed, where true Joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collected for
the 4th.
Sund. after
Easter.

G g 2

SER.

SERMON XXII.

ON THE

First Commandment.

Exod. xx. 3.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

THese Words contain the *First Commandment* in the *Decalogue*, prescribing the *Object* and *Act* of *Worship*. Which is justly therefore placed the *First*, as being the *Foundation* of all the rest; Even the *Whole* of *Religion*, depending upon the *Truth* of its *Object* and the *Nature* of its *Act*, in reference thereto. For where there is no *God* owned, there can be no *Religion*; And where *God* is not owned aright, there the *Religion* that is, must necessarily be false. That therefore we may have a *Religion*, and that only which is the *True* one, the *First* Injunction commanding our *Regard* is that we own the only *True God*, and own him in *Truth*; *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.*

In which Words, as was said, is prescribed us,

I. The *Object* of Religious *Worship*, even no other *Gods* before me. And.

II. The *Act* expressing such Worship, in reference to this Object; termed here an *having of no other Gods.*

1. *The Object of Religious Worship*, here enjoined *us*, is *No other Gods before me*, Prescribing it under *Three* several Notions, as appropriated to Religious Worship. 1. In respect to its *Existence*; The Object of Religious Worship must be *God*. 2. In respect to its *Unity*; It must be *no other God*. And, 3. In respect to its *Verity*; It must be *no other God but the true God of Israel, or before me.* *The Object of Worship.*

1. *Here is the Object of Religious Worship prescribed* *Only God.* *in respect to its Existence*; Which is *God*: That not being a Religious Worship that hath not God for its Object. Wherefore there is a *Twofold Worship* distinguished by its Object; even that which is *Civil*, and that which is *Religious*. The First imports that *Reverence* we yield upon the account of some Finite Created Excellencies, the Latter that which is yielded only on the Account of Infinite and Uncreated Perfections. In the First Respect we do *Worship* to our Betters, and express thereby only our *Manners*; but in the Latter we Reverence God, and thereby signify our *Devotion*. So that wherever there is Religious Worship, there necessarily is supposed the *Existence of a God*; to the owing whereof this Precept obliging, striketh at the Root of all *Atheism*. Insomuch that he is utterly incapacitated to receive this *Law*, who is not convinced, of what there is all the Reason in the World to believe, that *there is a God*. Which therefore is not only *supposed*, but rather *restrained* in the Command; enjoyning Men not so much to have a God to Worship, as prohibiting them to Multiply Gods to themselves; allowing

no other but the one true God of Israel. And therefore also

But One
God.

1 Cor. 8.
4, 5, 6.

See Sermon
on the First
Article.

2. *Here is the Object of Religious Worship prescribed, in respect to its Unity.* For as it is only God must be worshipped, so must no other but he: *Thou shalt have no other Gods;* Not here supposing that there really are any more Gods to be had; but only forbidding any thing else to be esteemed or worshipped by us as God. For tho our Worship cannot change the Nature of Things, or make any Thing a God that is not really so; yet doth it make it so to us, by using it thereby as God. And therefore this Precept is also level'd against *Polytheism*. Which was the Sin of the *Heathen*; who tho they generally believe that there was only one Supreme Being, the Author and Governor of all the rest, yet with him they worshiped a Multitude of Inferiour Deities, who as his Deputies were supposed to preside over several Parts of the Universe. And to this the *Apostle* seems to allude, when he says, *We know there is no other God but one; For tho there be that are called Gods, both in Heaven and Earth (as there be Gods many, and Lords many) but to us there are but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.* Rejecting therefore all these Inferiour and Subordinate Deities of the *Heathens* (whether those in *Heaven*, as *Angels, Sun, Moon, &c.* or those in the *Earth*, as *Men, Beasts, Stocks, Stones, yea and the Devil too*) we are here forbid to have any more than only the Supreme One God; As to whom, tho we Worship *Three Persons*, yet own we only *One Essence*. For more Gods than this as there cannot be, so him alone are we to make the Object of our Religious Worship. And therefore, finally,

3. *Here*

3. *Here is this prescribed us in respect to its Verity: The True* We being enjoined to *have*, as no more, so no *God. mens.* *other God's*, of what subordinate Nature so ever, but the *One only True God*, exclusive of every other Object from Religious Worship. Therefore it is added *no other Gods*, [*Alii*, according to some; *Alieni*, according to others] *i. e.* No strange Gods; *But*, or (as in the Text) *Before me*; *i. e.* (according to the Hebrew) *to or at my Face*, *i. e.* in *Comparison* or *Competition* with me; so as to be *Confronted* to me, or in *Consort* and together with me, *i. e.* the God of *Israel*, manifested to be the *One True God* by the many *Miracles* and *Mer- cies* wrought by him, seeing and taking special Notice how Mens Hearts stand affected to him and his Worship, and being highly offended with the least Propensions of the Heart to *Idolatry*, against which also this Precept, in this Notion is directly level'd, tho never so secret and undiscernable by the Eyes of Men. And therefore, as we must have a *God* to Worship; so are we obliged to Worship but *One*; and *nothing else* but this *One*, either in stead of him, or in Copartnership with him. Neither *Angel*, nor *Saint*, nor *Sacrament*, nor *Relict*, having any place allowable in our Religious Services, according to the exprefs Intent of this *Commandment* which thus prescribes the *Ob- ject* of Worship.

II. *The Act expressing such our Worship in refe-* *The Act of* *rence to this Object* is here termed an *having of no Religion* *other Gods*. Not as if it were in our Power to *have* *Worship*. any other, since there is *no other*; But only (what alone depends upon our Will, and is in our Power either to admit or refuse, and therefore can be the Matter of a Command) to *Own* and *Acknow-*

ledge the One true God and no other but he. To have, supposing our admittance of that which we are said to have. And if we then do not admit of God and his Authority, neither can we be said to have him, nor to perform that which this Precept requireth of us; Which is, that we own the True God by all the Powers and Faculties of our Nature, making him alone the Object of the Worship both of our Souls and Bodies, which are both his, and in both which he is to be glorified by us, Expressing hereby the several Duties Commanded, and suppressing the several Sins Prohibited under this First Precept.

1 Cor. 6. 20

By the Soul

1. In our Souls, we are to own the One only True God, by duly acknowledging and Worshipping him in all the Faculties thereof according to Truth; Having him in our Understandings, Wills and Affections.

In our Understandings,

1. In our Understandings we may be said to have God, when we Apprehend aright his Nature and Attributes according to what he hath revealed of himself to us in his Word and Works; When also we Reflect much and often on what we know of him; And when, from thence, we become convinced to Believe him, so as to be ruled by him. Hence we are by this Command obliged to the Duties of Divine Knowledge, Consideration and Faith; and Prohibited the Sins of Ignorance, Inconsideration and Infidelity; whereby as the Understanding receives and owns God by those, so it excludes and denies him by these.

Obliging to Knowledge

Jo. 4. 22.

For without a due Knowledge of God it will be impossible to avoid the Guilt of what the Samaritans were condemned for, Worshipping we know not what; even a Fancy and Vain Imagination of our own Shaping, instead of the True God, perhaps

no more representing his Infinite Perfections and Excellencies, than those Dumb Idols that the Heathen Worshipped; Whereof our Adoration will be but Superstition, and our selves Idolaters.

And without Frequent and Serious Reflections *Considera-* on what we never so rightly Apprehend of the *tion.* Divine Nature, we shall live without God in this World, tho it be never so full of him; Forgetfulness frustrating his Existence, and rendering him to us as not in Being, while not in our Minds; so that professing that we know God, in Works we shall deny him. Tit. 1. 16.

And, Finally, without our Belief of whatever Faith. he affirms, our Knowledge and Remembrance of him will but add to the Indignity reflected upon him by our Infidelity; which denying his Veracity, contemning his Power, and acting inconsistently with all his other Attributes, thereby Un-Gods him, and sets up an Impotent false Idol of our own Imagination in the room of the True God. So that to Have and Own God in our Understandings, we are thus necessarily obliged to Know and Remember, and Believe on him therewith.

2. In our Will, God may, also, be had or own'd *In our Will.* by the different Acts thereof, regarding either the End or Means; Our Wills being conformed to that of Gods, by our Volitions intending his Glory, and by our Elections yielding him a ready and chearful Submission. And this further obligeth us by this Commandment, to seek God's Glory and submit to his Will, whether in Doing what he Commands, or in Bearing and suffering what he Orders for, or Inflicts on us; Injoyning the Duties of Obedience, Contentment and Patience, and Prohibiting the Sins contrary thereto.

Obliging to
Glorify
God.

To make the *Glory of God* the End of every Action, is what God Wills in himself; and which therefore, in Testimony of our Subjection to and Acknowledgment of him, we also ought to Conform to, and Will concerning him. And as the End of all God's Doings is the manifestation of his own Glory, so while we drive at the same End, and Desire and are delighted with the same thing, we thereby acknowledge him God in our Wills, and that we have no other before him; Even none in Heaven but he, as the Psalmist expresseth it, and none in all the Earth that we desire besides, or in Comparison of him.

Obedience.

To Obey God's Will in all his Commands, is to own his *Soveraignty*, and to approve his Pleasure before our own. For as the *Divine Glory* is what God Wills in himself, so his *Commanding* is the result of his Will concerning us; by Submission whereto we own him the God of our Wills; whereas by breaking his Laws, or by keeping them out of some sinister Design for our own Interest and Convenience only, or by submitting to them fore against our Wills, as it were by Force and with Reluctancy, and Regret, we exclude God our Elections, and have him not in our Wills, in that Station and Degree which is due to him, substituting somewhat else above him, and consequently having that for our [Other] God there before him.

Content.

To be Content with such Things as we have, owns God the Dispenser thereof, and approves of his *Wisdom* and *Goodness* therein, and sets him above Chance or Choice, as the first Mover and Supreme Governour of whatever happens under the Sun. Whereas *Discontent*, either Denies or Reproaches his Dominion, and is nothing less than Treason

son and Rebellion; either prostituting God's Throne to the Usurpation of Chance, or the Insults of an Ungovernable Will; wresting the Sceptre out of his Hand, or charging him with Corruption or Weakness in Management thereof, under the false Notion of *not doing Right*, denying him to be *the Judge of all the Earth*.

Finally, To be *Patient in Tribulation*, is an *Patience*. owning of God in our *Affliction*; which, receiving as the Effect of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, the Will chearfully consents to, and Approves of, as *Best* for, tho at present seeming never so *Bad* to us. Intirely resigning up it self and Interests to the Divine Choice and Determination in the Case, and resting satisfied in whatever Manner or Measure that shall be. Whereas *Impatience* is nothing less than a daring to contend with the Almighty for Choice, whether of his or our own will; or rather an haughty denying to own any other superiour Will to ours; so as either not to own God, or to *have another before him*.

3. Lastly, *In our Affections*, also, to *have*, or *In our Affections*. own, and Acknowledge God, according to the Import of this *Commandment*, obliges us both to *conform them, by way of Imitation*, to what we observe in the Divine Nature; by our *following* [or Imitating] whereby we evidence our selves to be his *Children*; Loving what he Loves, and Hating what he hates, and becoming as he requires us to be, *Holy, and Pure, and Merciful* as he is; And also to *Excite them, by Way of Motive*; suitable to the Divine Perfections, inviting them as their Proper Objects; yielding God our *Love*, because of his Goodness, and our *Fear and Reverence* because of his *Power, Justice and Majesty*, &c. In which respect this Precept further obliges to the Duties

Eph. 5. 1.

Duties of our *Imitating God* in his Communicable Perfections, and of *Love*, and *Fear*, and *Reverence* towards him, from the Consideration of his Incommunicable Properties; And Forbids the Sins contrary thereto.

Obliging to Imitation. To Imitate the Communicable Perfections of the Divine Nature in our Affections is as clear a Testimony of our Acknowledgment of God, as a Flatterers mimicking the Passions and Inclinations of his Patron is of Obsequiousness, whereof every Body knows him to be the most exquisite Pattern. It renders the Divinity visible, and advances Humane Nature into the nearest Union therewith; so that to have God for our Pattern, is to have him before all others: Whereas to be unlike him, is so far to reject him in our Affection, and discovers Aversion towards him.

Love. To Love God is to accept him as the chief Object of our Desire and Joy, and Zeal; whereby we own our Admittance of him, and the Authority we resign to him in our Affections. And this is when our Desires are fervent and Affectionate after him, and we find an Holy Impatience in our Spirit till we enjoy him, without whom nothing else can content us. When our Joy is then fullest, Springing and Diffusing it self through our Hearts, when engaged in Communion with him. And when our Zeal is never so much kindled as in the Cause of God, and our Anger and Grief never appear for any Wrongs done to our selves, as they do for the Provocations that are daily committed against the Majesty of Heaven; For which we can heartily Mourn in Secret, and if we have Power and Authority to do it,

it, Punish and Avenge them openly. Such a Flame of Affection is God's Peculiar; it aspires Heavenward, and will at last carry up the Soul with it, and lodge it there, where the *Desire* of Love shall be satisfied, the *Joy* of it perfected, and *Zeal* of it amply rewarded.

And so to *Fear and Reverence God*, acknowledging both his *Existence* and *Nature*; that there is a God, and that we believe him to be such as he hath declared himself to be. For seeing it was *Fear* that first gave being to the Powers above (according to the *Atheists* own Maxim) it must follow that the want hereof disowns the supreme Being, and that where there is *no Fear of God*, there is no *Having* or Admittance of him, tho he never the less is still in Being. And therefore the *having no fear of God before the Eyes*, as it fitly accounts for the most Villainous Actions falling under Condemnation; so a *Man fearing God* is generally the Character of a true Worshiper and Obedient Servant of him. Upon which account both *Love* and *Fear*, are really not so much a Part, as the Sum of the whole Divine Law; and tho both are particular distinct Branches of that Worship and Service we owe God under this *First Commandment*, yet are they necessarily Interested in all the rest, as they Dispose and Capacitate the Soul to obey God in any of them.

*Fear and
Reverence.*

Act. 10. 2.

Thus therefore are we by this *Commandment* to *Have* and *Admit* of God's Authority over us in every distinct Faculty of the Soul: which constitutes those Internal Acts of Worship conversant about the only true God as their Proper Object. And as we are thereby obliged in our *Understandings* to *Know*, and *Reflect*, and *Believe* on God; In
our

our *Wills* to intend *his Glory*, and Do and Suffer his Pleasure; And in our *Affections* to Imitate, and Love, and Fear him; so are we in those several Faculties to express these Acts of Worship as such, towards *no other* but the one True God of *Israel*, according to the Import of this Precept respecting the Soul, which prohibits the *having of any other Gods before him*.

But besides the *Soul* the Humane Nature including also the *Body*, which is no less a Creature of Gods; and from which some Tribute is therefore due to, and required by him, Consider we how this Precept affects this Part of our Nature also, and by what Acts we signify our Admittance of God's Authority over us, whom we must own

*By the
Body.*

2. *In our Bodies*, by such External Performances as not only express, but conduce to the Increase of Inward Devotion, and are eminently serviceable to the Grand Design of Religion, which is to *Glorify God* by manifesting the Divine Excellencies. Of which External Performances there are some that may be considered as *Natural*, being the Dictates of Universal Reason, to which we are led by Natural Light, and wherein we chiefly acknowledge the Reason of the thing; and others that are to be considered as *Instituted*, which have their Foundation in Positive Institution, depending purely upon God's Good Pleasure, and wherein we own his Sovereign Will only.

*In Natural
Acts.
Bowing.*

The Natural Acts of Worship whereby we own God, are either such as the *Whole Body* is concerned in, as an Humble *Bowing* of it; which accompanied with due Circumstances, all Nations look upon as an Indication of that Esteem had of another's Worth; or else such as some *Particular Part* is more immediately Interested in, whereof the

Tongue

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Tongue being the Chief Part, or Principal Instrument in the External Service of God, and often therefore called *our Glory*, by it are performed in Obedience to this Precept, the Duties of *Prayer*, of *Praise* and of *Vowing*, which are Acts of *Natural Worship* immediately respecting God.

Prayer hath ever been esteemed a Principal Part of Religion. And by it we own our Dependance on God for all we have or Desire; his Ability to help, and his Immensity to hear us. A Neglect to Pay him which Tribute is a Disowning his Deity, and substituting *Chance*, or *our Selves*, as *Gods before him*, or in his stead. For as *he that cometh to God must Believe that he is*, so he that doth not come to him, by way of Address, must necessarily be supposed to deny him, and *believe that he is not*. And if then we have recourse only to our own *Policy* or *Power* to accomplish our Designs, and when they succeed ascribe the Success of them only to our own *Wisdom* and *Conduct*, or to *Chance*, or meer *Natural Causes*, we make *these* our *Idols*, and give them the *Honour* which is due only unto God. Whence the Prophet *Habbakkuk* speaks of such who *Sacrifice to their Net, and burn Incense to their Drag, because by them their Portion is fat, and their Meat plenteous*. So that *Prayer* is a Service so Peculiarly Gods, that its Object is necessarily either made or own'd so by it.

Praise is another Part of *Natural Worship*, whereby is express'd our Acknowledgments of God. For which End as our *Tongue* seems to be given us, so is it fitted to set forth the Excellencies of the Almighty, the Variety of Expressions qualifying not to want Words to Declare either the Divine Perfections, or the Infiniteness thereof. In this Way therefore all Nations have expressed their

their esteem of their Deities. And this is a Sa-
 Hof. 14.2. crifice God hath required, even of the Calves of
 our Lips, as the Prophet speaks, and Fruit of our Lips;
 Heb. 13.5. as the Apostle styles it, when he bids us offer the Sa-
 crifice of Praise continually, that is, says he, the Fruit
 of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name, [εὐχαριστῶντες,
 confessing to the Glory of his Name, both his
 Goodness and our sense thereof.] Accordingly
 Ps. 26.7. the Psalmist abounds with such like Expressions, I
 will, says he, publish with the Voice of Thanksgiving,
 —89.2. and tell of all his Wondrous Works. I will sing of the
 Mercies of the Lord for ever; with my mouth will I
 make known his Faithfulness to all Generations. Si-
 lence in this Case is so far from Consent, that it in-
 fers quite the contrary; Inasmuch that he who
 hath nothing to say in Praise of God, may rea-
 sonably be concluded either to Deny or Disregard
 him, in Opposition to this Command.

Oaths. And so Solemn Oaths and Religious Vows are also
 Parts of Natural Worship, they both involving
 a plain Acknowledgment of the Perfections of the
 Divine Nature. For he who takes an Oath invo-
 cates God to be a Witness and Revenger; which
 includes a Confession of his Omniscience, that he
 is Privy to that which is Secret and Unknown
 to others; of his Veracity, that he takes Pleasure
 in Truth, and hath a perfect Detestation of that
 which is opposite to it; And of his Power, that he
 is able to take Vengeance, and assert the Dignity
 of the Law which is violated. And this being so
 sacred an Act, always to be performed with
 great Solemnity and Reverence; as it is justly re-
 strain'd, by our Saviour, to Extraordinary Occasions,
 and forbid to be used at all, where there is no need.
 Mat. 5.34. in common Conversation; so do they appear very
 unreasonable, who interpret this to be excluded

all Occasions whatsoever, and by not *swearing at all*, according to the Letter, deny God a due Part of his Worship according to this *Command*.

And so he who makes a Solemn *Vow*, if it be *Vows*, to engage himself to some Expressions of *Gratitude*, doth thereby declare his deep Sense of the Divine *Benignity*; If to bind himself the faster to a *Loyal* deportment in his Conversation, the *Authority* and Dominion of Heaven over him: On both Accounts acknowledging hereby the *Consciousness* of God both to his *Resolutions* and *Wants*; and his *Ability* to supply them, and *Deliver* him either from his *Fears*, or from his *Dangers*. Which Acknowledgment is so much the more Valuable, because *Vows* are seldom made but when Men are encompassed with the greatest *Dangers*, and there is little Hope of escaping, but by some signal *Providence*. For he that in such Cases *Vows* any thing to God for his *Deliverance*, shews he looks upon him to be an Almighty Power, and that he can Act not only in concurrence with Natural Causes, but *without* and *against* them.

By *Swearing* therefore by the Name of God, and *Vowing* thereto, we give an evident Testimony of our Acknowledgment of him; and of our *having him*, and none other before him; which Acts of Natural Worship we are consequently engaged hereby to yield God with our Bodies. Besides which, there are, as was said,

Instituted Acts of Worship whereby we are to own God. For the *New Covenant*, of which our Blessed Lord is the *Mediator*, being made by the Positive Pleasure of the Divine Will, and God designing to Publish it, made choice of his *Word* and *Sacraments* to do it by; the *Preaching*, *Hearing*, and *Reading* which *Word*, and duly receiving the

Holy Sacraments become therefore Acts of *Instituted Worship*, and our Duty by the Positive Institution of the New Covenant, to import an Acknowledgment of the Benignity of God towards Mankind, implied also in this *First Commandment* obliging thereto.

Preaching. For *Preaching the Gospel* as it imports Teaching, is a Religious Duty that looks down upon only Men; But as it also signifies a Publishing and Proclaiming before Men, with Integrity of Heart, the Methods of Divine Grace in the Work of Redemption, so it looks upwards to God, and may challenge a place among the Parts of his Worship. Upon which account the Apostle saith of
 2Cor.2.15 *Ministers*, that they are unto God a sweet Savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that Perish: Intimating hereby that whether our Hearers admit or Refuse our Ministerial Instructions; Yet God is as really Worshiped by our *Preaching* them, as he was by those Perfumed Offerings under the Law here alluded to.

Hearing. And so for *Hearing*, which requires our Reverent Attention. It expressing our regard to God's Authority to Command and Rule us by his Word, and to his Sufficiency and Readiness by his Wisdom and Goodness to instruct us thereby, hath been therefore admitted of as no less significant of Divine Worship, even from the Natural Reason of the Thing, as well as Positive Appointment of God himself.

Reading. And the very same will serve to be said for *Reading God's Word*; since he that Reads the Scriptures as the very Word of the Living God, with an Intention to be made Wise unto Salvation by it, doth thereby plainly manifest his deep Sense of the Incomprehensible and Profound Wisdom and Understanding of the Author of it. And

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And then, Finally, for the duly *Receiving of the* ^{The Sacra-}
Holy Sacraments, which are these two, *Baptism* ^{ments.}
 and the *Supper of the Lord*; Our being *Baptised in*
the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the
Holy Ghost, is also an Expression of a Reverential
Acknowledgment of, and an Intire *Devotion* to the
 Sacred and Blessed *Trinity*. And our participating
 in the *Lord's Supper* imports a Laudatory *Agnition*
 of him: It not being an empty *Remembrance* that is
 intended, but a Solemn Commemoration, attend-
 ed with the most Emphatical Expressions of Praise
 and Gratitude; and therefore stiled a *Shewing Bread*
 (in allusion to the Jewish *Passover*) and the Wine
 is called the *Cup of Blessing*, and the whole Cere-
 mony by the Greeks an *Eucharist*.

And thus by these *Natural and Instituted Acts*
 of Worship God receiving from us Corporeal Ser-
 vice and Acknowledgments, it follows that these
 also are all of them Duties comprised in this *First*
Commandment, and implied in the Phrase of *not*
having any other before the one True God of Israel.

Hereby then, as we are obliged to *have God*,
 in his *Existence, Unity and Verity*, and none other
 for the *Object* of our Religious Worship: so are
 we also obliged to own and embrace him as well
 by the *Internal Acts of Worship* in all the Powers
 and Faculties of our *Souls*, as by the *External Acts*
 of Worship, whether Natural or Instituted, re-
 lating to our *Bodies*. And therefore, in the Af-
 firmative, we are here commanded, By our *Souls*,
 to *Know*, and *Remember*, and *Believe*, and *Glorify*,
 and *Obey*, and *Imitate*, and *Love*, and *Fear God*;
 and with our *Bodies* to *Pray*, and *Praise*, and
Swear, and *Vow* before him, and to attend duly
 and devoutly his Holy Ordinances of *Preaching*,
Hearing, and *Reading his Word*, and *Receiving his*

Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. And no less in the Negative we are also here forbidden Ignorance, and Forgetfulness, and Infidelity, and Carnality, and Rebellion, and Depravity, and Prophaneness, and Presumption against God in our Inward Man; And, in our Outward-Man, Irreverence, Unthankfulness, and Neglect of due Attendance on him in all his Holy Ordinances. In the avoiding which Sins, and performing which Duties, the Observance of this First Commandment manifestly consists; Only with this Caution, because being Immediate Acts of Divine Worship, and of so Sacred a Nature; it is further hereby required of us, that all these Services be performed with Sincerity and true Devotion; this being implied also in the Expression before me; Which, as it may signify [in my Sight] forbids both Prophaneness on the one Hand, and Hypocrisy on the other. For because that every Thing we do is before God, therefore what we do as before him, ought especially to be done to him, who requireth Truth in the inward Part, and is not delighted with the Ostentation of Performance, but with the Sincerity of Intention.

Such is the Import of the First of these Ten Words God Spake; Requiring a most Reasonable Service from us, depending upon our Assent to the Notion of his Existence: Insomuch that to Neglect or Act contrary hereto, is, as much as lies in our Power, to destroy his very Being; *Not liking to retain God in Knowledge, living without him in this World, and as unconcerned for him, as if there were no such Being. Therefore Obedience to this First and Principal Precept stands engaged;*
 1. In regard to the Existence of God, to own and declare our Belief thereof. 2. In regard to the
Wisdom

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Wisdom and Goodness of his Will, whose Commands deserve our due Observance. 3. In regard to the Perfection and Amiability of his Essence, able to Charm and Allure us. 4. In Gratitude towards him for our Being, Capacities and Enjoyments received from him. And, 5. Even in Love to our selves, who can alone be made Happy and Miserable, by Pleasing or Provoking him. O come, therefore let us Worship and Bow down; let us Kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the People of his Pasture, and the Sheep of his Hand. He is not a God that deserves to be denied or neglected by us; whom we need not be ashamed to own; before whom nothing can be preferable to our Advantage; or besides whom nothing is either to be Desired or Feared by us. To his best of Services, let us be sincerely Devoted; submitting our selves wholly to his Holy Will and Pleasure, and studying to serve him in true Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life. Pf. 95.6,7.

Almighty and Merciful God, of whose only Gift it cometh, that thy faithful People do unto thee true and laudable Service: Grant, we beseech thee, that we may so faithfully serve thee in this Life, that we fail not finally to attain thy heavenly Promises, through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. Collect for the 13th. Sunday after Trinity.



Hh 3

SER.

SERMON XXIII.

ON THE

Second Commandment.

Exod. xx. 4, &c,

Thou shalt not make unto thee any Graven Image, or any Likeness of any thing, that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or that is in the Water under the Earth.

Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them: For I the Lord thy God am a Jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the Third and Fourth Generation of them that hate me: And shewing Mercy unto Thousands of them that Love me, and keep my Commandments.

After the Object of Religious Worship which was the Argument of the First Commandment, followeth here the Matter of all outward Instituted Worship together with the Sanction thereof, as the Argument or Purport of this Second Commandment, prohibiting Image Worship, not as a Distinct Object of Worship

Worship, but as a Distinct *Kind* and *Matter* of Worship. For he who worshipeth *the Likeness of any Thing*, doth not make that his God before which he falls down, but That which it was designed to represent. Which is so evident a Truth that the *Papists* themselves, who neither by Words nor Deeds will allow this for a Distinct Commandment, are forced to alledge it in behalf of their own Idololatrical Worship. Neither can *Images* be said to be the Gods of the Heathen, the generality of them being undoubtedly too Wise to terminate their Worship there, and the most Brutish of them, one would think, too Sensible to Believe a *Stone*, or a Piece of *Wood* to be a God. Besides, that the very Name of an *Image* directs me to that of which it is said to be an Image. So that the *Worshipping of Images* is not so much the *Worshipping of a False God*, or an Error in the *Object*; as the *Worshipping the True God falsely*, which is an Error in the *Matter* or *Manner* of Worship.

The *First Commandment* therefore having caution'd us as to the *Object*, this *Second* follows seasonably to caution us as to the *Matter* or *Manner* of outward Instituted Worship; Interdicting, as to the chief Intent of it, that Mode, which in the Practice of Ancient times had, through the Devils *Malice* and some Mens *Fraud* conspiring with others *Superstitious Ignorance* and *Fondness*, so generally prevailed, of representing the Deities, (apprehended so) in some visible corporeal Shape, and thereto yielding such Expressions of Respect as they conceived suitable and acceptable to such Deities.

Against such Mode of Worship this *Commandment* is enacted, plainly consisting of Two Parts, viz.

I. *The Command or Law it self, expressed Negatively. Thou shalt not make unto thee any Graven Image, or any Likeness of any Thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or that is in the Water under the Earth. Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them.*

II. *The Sanction hereof, which is Twofold.*
 1. *By way of Commination, denouncing a severe and fearful Threat against its Transgressors. For I the Lord thy God am a Jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the Third and Fourth Generation of them that hate me. And,*
 2. *By way of Encouragement, making a Gracious Promise of Mercy to the Careful and Conscientious Observance of it; Shewing Mercy unto Thousands of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.*

The Command.

I. Consider we, First, *The Command or Prohibition it self; here expressed concerning Images in a Double Respect. 1. As respecting the Making, And, 2. As respecting the Worshipping of Images.*

1. *As respecting the making of Images, the first Part of the Prohibition runs thus; Thou shalt not make unto thee any Graven Image, or any Likeness of any Thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath: or that is in the Water under the Earth. Whereby the Prohibition, in respect of its Act, is limited to the Making; in reference to its Object, is wholly referred to Images.*

The making of Images prohibited.

By making of an Image or Likeness, is meant the Forming or Shaping thereof, whether by our Minds or Hands, either our selves or by our Procurement.

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curement. For it is not the *Workman* only that is here restrained, but also the *User* of the Work; Nor only the *Hands* but the *Phancy* also that is tyed up. And therefore we are not so much as to *Imagine* or *Phancy* to our selves an Image in our Minds, much less *make* one, or *Cause* one to be made, or *use* it when it is made in Religious Worship, whether *Cast* or *Carved*, or *Painted* with Hands; It not being any one particular manner or way of *Making*, but the *Making* it self by whatever manner that is here condemned. And therefore what Restraint belongs to this *Act* is not to be conceived to arise from the Word that expresseth it, but only from the *Object* it here respects, which is *any Graven Image, or the Likeness of any Thing*.

By an *Image* is meant a Representation; and by its being *Graven*, the Protuberancy or Carving thereof, whether in the Mould wherein it may be cast, whence it is called a *Moulten Image*, or immediately on the Matter it is made of by the Workman's Tool, whence it is called a *Carved Image*, yet both being *Graven Images*, and both named expressly as thrown down by King *Josiah* when he began to purge *Judah* and *Jerusalem* from their Idolatry. Not that yet by such an Image here mentioned *only such* or *all such* are here Prohibited; Other Images being as culpable as those which are *Graven*, And some even of any sort being Innocent enough; But these only are here Instanced in, and are most frequently forbidden by the *Scriptures*, because Images of this Kind were most in Use among the Heathen; and because by their Figure they might be most apt to make the simple believe that they were those very Things they were design'd to represent, or at least

The Images here forbid to be made.

2 Chr. 34

least that they were Impregnated with a Divine Spirit. Otherwise, there is no doubt but that, contrary to the Opinion of the *Greek* and *Muscovish* Church and some of the Western Writers Painted Images, and such as are described upon a Plane, are as much unlawful, as Engraven and Protuberant ones. And therefore 'tis further to be observed that the very Letter of this Commandment mentions not only *Graven Images*, but the *Likeness of any Thing* indefinitely however Made, whether Graven or Painted in order to be worshipped, both being alike a Similitude, and equally oppugnant to the Reason of the Prohibition. And yet is not this to be Understood as extending to *all* Images, whether Graven or otherwise, whatsoever: But only to such as are designed to represent the Divine Majesty; Which tho' not here literally express'd, yet must necessarily be meant, as appears evident as well from the *Intent* of this Command, as from the *Reason* of the Thing it self.

For the *Design* of the Command, is directly and strictly to regulate the Worship of God; and is therefore made one of the *First Table* Duties respecting his Person, and that Honour and Esteem which we ought to have for him: and is immediately followed with the Prohibition of *Bowing down to Images and serving them*; Which in Reason restrains this Prohibition to a Representation of the *Invisible* Deity, by any *Visible* Appearances. Which *Moses* expressly shews to be the Ground of the Prohibition, when he thus enforces its Observation on the *Israelites*: *Take ye therefore, says* he, *good heed unto your selves (for ye saw no manner of Similitude on the Day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the Fire) lest ye corrupt*
your

Dent. 4. 15,
16, &c.

your selves; and make you a graven Image the Similitude of any Figure, the Likeness of Male or Female. And in which Sense the Prophet *Isaiah* plainly intimates he understood it, when he also thus speaks; To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare to him. And the Reason of the Thing shews it capable of no other Meaning; since Images of any Thing but God are in themselves Innocent; the

Isa. 40. 18.

Exod. 35.

31.

Art of making them, being of Divine Appointment, and having been employed by Divine Authority, and Being, not abused by our selves to previous Ends, of good Use. And since all Corporeal Images of God are very Unreasonable and Sinful, whether made by the Hand, or formed by the Phancy; the Work of both necessarily falling short of, and doing great indignity to the glorious Excellency of his Nature, infinitely transcending Humane Comprehension; only with this difference, that the Resemblances of God made by Mens Hands disparage him to the View and Apprehensions of the Publick, whereas those formed of him only in the Phancy, expose him only to his own face; which yet detracts little from the Provocation, since God's Notice is of more concern to us, than that of all the World besides. Therefore our Phancy as well as our Hands are restrained by this Prohibition, which obligeth us to Form no Image or Likeness of God, either by the one or the other, of whom there can be no likeness made without a vast Incongruity, and to his Disparagement; Changing, as St. Paul expresth it, the Glory of the Incorruptible God, into an Image made like to Corruptible Men, and to Birds, and Four-Footed Beasts, and Creeping Things: As the Israelites are said to have Changed their Glory [even the Glorious God that ruled them] into the similitude of an

Rom. 1. 23

Ec. 106. 20.

Ox,

Act. 17. 29. *Ox, that eateth Grass.* Contrary whereto St. Paul also argues that we ought not so much as to think that the Godhead is like unto Gold, or Silver, or Stone Graven by Art and Mans Device. And whom therefore we are obliged to *Worship*, as in *Spirit*, without any visible Representations of him, so in *Truth*, without any fanciful likening of him to any thing in our Imaginations; Forbearing to go about to shape God of any Fashion; thinking of him always with the most abstracted Thoughts; the very Resemblance of him by any matter or sensible Likeness to our selves or others, being both Unreasonable and Prophane.

See Serm.
3d.

And tho therefore the *Scriptures* do frequently ascribe to God the Members and Lineaments of a Man (the Reason whereof hath been already accounted for) yet must we conceive of him as abstracted from and infinitely above all such corporeal Phantasms; *not making to our selves* (as the Letter of this Commandment enjoyns) *i. e.* Not on our own Heads, conceiving of him under any determinate shape, or *Likeness of any Thing in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or in the Water under the Earth*; because this would be to set up the same Images of God in our *Imagination* which the *Heathen* heretofore, and Idolatrous *Christians* now set up to him in their *Temples*. Any other Beings we may form Ideas and Images of after our own Pleasure, so our design therein be Harmless; But the Infinite Being of God is to be confined to none, the *Making* of whose *Image*, either by *Hands* or *Phancy*, is the First Respect we observed the Prohibition here to be expressed in, in this *Commandment*.

2. The other is, *As respecting the Worshipping of Images*; which runs thus, *Thou shalt not bow down thy*

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thy self to them nor serve them. Whereby this Part also of the Prohibition, in respect of its *Act*, is restrained to *Bowing down*, and *serving*; In reference to its *Object*, is wholly refered to those *Images* and *Resemblances* before forbid to be *Made*.

Bowing down, and *serving* Import Religious Postures or External Worship peculiar to God; not to be given from him, or shared in with him; Who, as he is the only Object of Religious Worship, so are all those Acts which express it not to be given any thing else. And therefore, in being prohibited to *Bow down* and *Serve*, we are hereby forbid to express any Significations of doing Worship to any Thing else, whether an *Image* of God, or *Likeness* of any Thing else before prohibited to be *Made*. So that as we are not to make any Resemblance of God whatsoever, so are we forbid to *Worship* any Resemblance whether of God or of any other Thing. We must *make* nothing with an Intention to *Worship* it; and we must *Worship* nothing which we or others have *Made*.

The Scope therefore of this Commandment is to interdict the Worshiping the True God, after the Heathen manner of Worshiping their False Gods: Not forbidding Religious Gestures in Worship, but rather hereby more strictly enjoining them, as what he will not suffer to be alienated from himself; and importing in the Affirmative these Three Precepts: 1. *That we Worship God with our Bodies as well as Minds*, who will be bowed down unto, and Served by us. 2. *That we, in doing this, make use of no manner of Images whatsoever.* And consequently, 3. *That we worship him only according to the Rules prescribed us by himself.*

1. *That*

With our
Bodies.

1 Cor. 6.
19, 20.

Not by
Images.

1. That we Worship God with our Bodies as well as Minds, is evidently the contrary Positive Duty implied in the Negative Command of not *Bowing down*, nor *serv[ing]* him by any *Image or Likeness*, appropriating all External Worship to himself, which his *Jealousy* will not suffer him to be rival'd in by any other Object. And therefore as the *First Command* respected *Internal*, so doth this Second respect *External Acts* of Religious Worship, Without which, tho the Sincerity of our Affections and Intentions cannot be unknown to God, yet are they nevertheless necessary to exemplify this, to his Glory, for the Edification of Others, and furtherance thereof in our selves. Bodily Worship contributing mightily to the Advantage of Spiritual; and the Soul not only signifying and expressing her Devotion by the lowly Postures of the Body, but also cherishing and helping it forward. Besides that God hath Created the whole Man, which entitles him to Homage from the Body as well as Soul. He equally sustains both in their Being. Both were redeemed for his Service by Christ. And both partake of the Blessings of Obedience, as equally engaged in the Service of Obedience. For God expects to be Worshiped by us, as he hath made us; as Men consisting of both Soul and Body; and therefore as a Religion consisting in *Externals* only is not worthy of an Intellectual Nature, so a Worship purely *Mental* and Intellectual, is too Abstract and Sublime for a Nature allied to Sense, and depending upon it.

2. That we yet, in yielding God the Service of our Bodies in his Worship, make use of no manner of Images whatsoever, the very Letter of the Command enjoyns; allowing no *Bowing down* to Images
or

or applying them to our Divine Services; where-
in the Mind is to be raised above gross Sense and
Phancy, and the most high and worthy Concep-
tions are to be entertained of God, as incompara-
bly superiour to all things which we do see or
know, who is transcendently perfect in Goodness,
Justice, Wisdom and Power. To whose Nature,
therefore, the use of *Images*, to Remember him
by in our Devotions, seem very disagreeable and
injurious, as tending to impress unsuitable Ideas;
And which being *Bowed down to*, are Honoured
too much, as God is too little thereby; to whom
all bodily Worship belongs, as much as the Ele-
vation of the Soul in Religious Addresses.

Therefore says God by his Prophet, *I am the* Isa. 43. 1.
Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not
give to another, neither my Praise to Graven Images.

In vain then have some endeavoured to evade
and elude, by slender Pretences, and subtle
Distinctions, a Law given not to employ the
Learning of Scholars, and Cunning of Designing
Wits, but to direct the Practice of Rude and
plain People; whom it forbiddeth the Use of
Images in whatever respect in Religious Worship.
Let then Mens Intentions be never so sincere,
and their Devotions screwed up to the highest
Degree, yet they must necessarily dishonour and
provoke God, when they are doing that which is
contrary to his Command. Therefore, also, it fol-
lows

3. Lastly, *That we Worship God only according to* Nor by Hu-
the Rules prescribed us by himself. For God here mane In-
forbidding a Mode invented only by Men with- ventions.
out any Appointment from himself, signifies it
to be his Pleasure, to be Worshiped only accor-
ding to his own Will. And as then we must have

no other God besides the True, so that God must have no other Service performed unto him, besides what he hath himself Required and Prescribed.

In the Sub-
stantials of
Religious
Worship.

Which yet is to be understood only as to the *Substantials* of Religious Worship; wherein God hath given us not only the Light of *Nature*, but the more clear Declarations, of his *Word* to direct us; and to add any thing hereto, would be a blemish to those Declarations, as being made Imperfect; and would impute Folly and Weakness unto God, as tho he wanted Wisdom to ordain what is necessary for his own Service, and would indeed have Servants, but knew not what Service to enjoy them.

But only in
the Circum-
stantials
thereof.

For as to the *Circumstantials* of Religious Worship, which are no *Part*, but only the *Modification* thereof, whether as to *Time* or *Place*, or *Gesture*, which yet are manifestly necessary to its Performance, concerning which God hath either not prescribed at all, or not with that fulness which is requisite, it must follow, that either the Worship of God must be wholly omitted, or left to the Reason of Private Men, to order in their own Private Worship, and to the Reason of Governours of the Church, to order in the Publiek Worship, as to the Circumstances thereof. Which yet is but according to the Rule God himself hath prescribed, who in General hath commanded to have
1 Cor. 14. all things done with Decency and Order, leaving the particular Determination hereof to the Wisdom of his Church. Wherein Care only ought to be had, That what is ordered be agreeable to those General Rules which the Light of Nature teaches, or the Doctrine of the Scriptures presents withal, lest otherwise Mens Inventions be not only set up for

for, but opposed to the Command of God; That also what is so ordered be not either represented nor enjoined as the Command of God; And that, finally, they be not represented as Things pleasing to God in themselves, only so far as they serve for Order and Decency, and as Instances of our Obedience to those whom God hath placed in Authority over us. And, in this respect, we are so far from being forbidden, that we are by this Commandment enjoined the Observation of Religious Ceremonies, tho of Humane Invention, provided they be *Lawful* for their *Matter*, *Moderate* for their *Number*, and in their *Use* tend to preserve *Order* and *Uniformity* and to promote *Edification*: The Imposition of such Things neither *Changing*, nor *Corrupting*, nor *Adding* to the Worship of God, the Substance whereof still remains the same in conformity to God's Law, notwithstanding the outward Circumstances and Indifferent Manner of it in conformity to Mans.

This then appears in a Word, to be the Import of this Prohibition as to the Matter of all outward Instituted Worship: Condemning our Representing God by any visible Resemblances whatsoever; Our Neglect of Worshiping him with our *Bodies*; Our Worshiping him by *Images* or contrary to what he himself hath *Commanded* us. And Enjoyning us, on the other Hand, to Apprehend Honourably and Spiritually of him; to express this by an External Worship; and with that *Decency and Order* as is agreeable to what himself hath prescribed us. Hereby securing it both from *Contempt* and *Superstition*; and banishing as well *Prophaneness* as *Idolatry*, and *Will-Worship* out of the Service of God.

This is what the Command requires, and what we therefore are obliged to take notice of; It being bound upon us by the most Sacred and Inviolable

The Sanction of the Command.

II. *Sanction*; the Lord our God who enacts it, declaring himself to be a Jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the Third and Fourth Generation of them that hate him; And shewing Mercy unto Thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments. And this is the other Part whereof this Law consists; which yet is thought not to be so peculiarly the *Sanction* to this Commandment, but that also it may be extended to the whole Decalogue, as a Proper Enforcement for every one of the Ten Words; and yet of all the Ten seems most fitly to be annexed to this against Idolatry, because a Sin God hath ever shewn himself to be very Jealous of, and hath Revenged with the most lasting Temporal Punishments.

This *Sanction* is evidently Twofold; being expressed, 1. *By Way of Commination*; Denouncing a Severe and Fearful Threat against the Transgressors of this Law; For I the Lord thy God am a Jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the Third and Fourth Generation of them that hate me. And, 2. *By way of Encouragement*; Making a gracious Promise of Mercy to the Obedient; Shewing Mercy unto Thousands of them that Love me and keep my Commandments. In both these Respects I shall endeavour to display the force of this *Sanction* distinctly; Beginning now with the First, which expresseth it,

The Commination.

1. *By Way of Commination*; Denouncing a Severe and Fearful Threat against the Transgressors of God's Commandments: For I the Lord thy God

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an a Jealous God, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the Third and Fourth Generation of them that hate me. Wherein are Considerable, 1. The Person Threatning: Even I the Lord thy God, who am a Jealous God. 2. The Punishment he threatens; Which is to Visit the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children. 3. The Delinquents threatned therewith; and they are them that hate God. And, 4. The Extent of the Punishment against such; denounced to continue unto the Third and Fourth Generation. Every one of which Considerations, aggravating the Commination, greatly enforces the Reason of the Command. For

1. The Person Threatning, is the Lord our God who is a Jealous God. In which Description of himself God lays before us the Consideration of his Dominion over us, his Relation to us, the Almighty-ness of his Power, and the Attribute of his Jealousy, to affect and perswade us. The Person threat-ning.

He is the Lord, of Absolute Authority and Dominion over us; whose we are by right of Creation and Government; to whom the Best and Utmost of our Service is due, without Neglect or Alienation; and who hath full Power to execute his Will upon us, which we cannot either Resist or Escape. The Lord.

He is Our God, in the nearest Relation to us; to whose Service and Command we are solemnly Dedicated and Devoted; with whom he hath condescended to enter into Covenant, and betrothed us to himself, to whom our faithfulness is absolutely and solely engaged by Consent. Our God.

He is also the Almighty God: אלהים [El Ka-na] a Strong as well as Jealous God (for the word אל [El] imports him to be) every way able to Revenge any Dishonour done him; to whom, we fee- Almighty.

1 Cor. 10.
22.
Jealous
God.

ble things, can be no equal Match, to contest and strut it out against him; who with infinite Ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into Misery, can crush us into Nothing. And do we then dare to provoke the Lord to Jealousy, are we stronger than he? Power acted by Jealousy is most terrible; which in our selves is described to be an *Affection or Passion of the Mind*, by which a Man is stirred up and provoked against whatsoever hinders the Enjoyment of that which he loveth: So that the Cause and Original hereof appears to be *Love*, and its Effect *Revenge*; which therefore is ascribed to God only by way of Accommodation and Similitude: in whom may be observed the same *Outward Effect*, tho there cannot possibly be in him the same *Inward Affection*. God shewing himself in regard to his Honour, as Men who are *Jealous* of theirs, are wont in their Capacity to do; and therefore speaking after the manner of Men, in condescension to the Weakness of our Apprehension, God assumes this Name to himself, thereby to enforce further our Obedience to his Precepts. For he being a *Jealous God*, would be apprehended by us as *Suspecting* and *Searching* into the Sincerity of our Profession; not to be imposed upon only by fair Pretences or Promises; to whom the heartiest of Endeavours and incessant Watchfulness over our Ways, is necessary to approve our selves; and from whom no fond Indulgence can be hoped for to the Presumptuous. For the effects of *Jealousy* are *Suspicion*, *Inquisitiveness*, and *Furious Revenge*; Before which as none can stand even in Man, so much less being provoked in God, whose Love abused is turned into the greatest hatred. And therefore,

The Punishment
threatened.
Pl. 89. 32.

2. The Punishment he threatens, is to Visit the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children. To Visit for Sin

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Sin is a known *Scripture Phrase*, to Punish for its Commission after some forbearance in this present Life, and consequently with Temporal Punishment; to which Children may be obnoxious for their Father's Guilt. Sin deriving Evil not only to a Man's self, but even to his Posterity. And as Wicked *Parents* deserve to be Punished in their *Children*, so the Children of such justly fare the Worse for their Fathers Deserts. For God may justly strike the Sinner in what Part he pleases; and therefore in their *Posterity*, as well as in their *Goods* or *Reputation*, as being the most Sensible and Afflictive to them. And usually the Posterity of such, whether from their Natural *Constitution*, their *Vicious Education*, or their Parents bad *Example*, treading in their Fathers Steps, justly draw upon themselves their Fathers Punishments; And the Rebellion of the Son of a Rebel, is an allowed aggravation of both the Guilt and Punishment thereof, as being against both much Patience and long Warning. Or however, the Personal Deserts of the best Children, may be sufficient to merit the greatest of this Worlds Afflictions; which God can turn to their greater Advantage, by giving them a Sanctified Use of his Dealings towards them; and by thus *visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon Good Children*, God may Correct and Bless *These* while he Punisheth and takes Vengeance on *Those*; and make the same Affliction a *Curse* to One, and a *Cure* to the Other.

The Threat therefore of this Law, is the Punishment of Sinners in their Posterity: and especially of *Idolaters*, as not only being in the Eyes of a *Jealous God* the most Provoking, but as usually regarding the Temporal Concern, chiefly of their Children in their Inducement to become such bold

Transgressors. The Fear of Ruine, or the Prospect of Advancement to a Family, being the common Snare to the Breach of this, more than any of the other Commandments. And therefore hath God fitly inserted this Threat here in its proper Place, to obviate such Inducement for the security of this Law. Hereby declaring that no Man can Transgress it but to the Ruine of his Family he seeks to raise: Which tho God can provide for against Mans Penalty, yet none can defend against God's Threat.

The Delinquents threatened. Haters of God.

The Delinquents threatened herewith, are said to be *them that hate God*. Which however reproachful a Title, yet is the best Sinners Merit from God; who best knows Men, and what they Deserve. Every wilful Sin implying a disposition of Mind repugnant to the Mind of God: it being impossible that those who are Disobedient and Rebellious should Love him. And therefore as they that *Love God*, are said to be such only as *keep his Commandments*, so are all Transgressors thereof signified by *them that hate him*. And yet of all *Haters of God*, the *Idolater* is primarily to be meant; who offers the greatest Indignity, and against whom Divine Justice is most resolutely armed.

The Extent of Punishment to the Third and Fourth Generation.

4. *The Extent of Punishment* is therefore denouneed to continue unto the Third and Fourth Generation. God seeming to extend his Threat thus far, to shew the Severity and Exactness of his Justice; pursuing the Wicked Parent in his Posterity with a Vengeance, that he may be likely never to out-live, and yet be in a possibility to see and feel the utmost of it. And yet he extends his Threat no further, to manifest the tenderness of his Mercy even towards Sinners, which he Glorifies against Judgment, and remembers in the midst

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of it, which he, however Provoked and justly Incensed, will not suffer to burn for ever; graciously stopping its Course, and not giving Way to all its Fury, that where once his Wrath hath seized on any Generation, it doth not burn down and Consume the whole before it.

The expediency of this Threat is very evident in these Two Particulars.

1. *The seasonable Caution it offers to Parents, Who* *its Caution to Parents.* even for the sake of their Children, as well as their own, are hereby sensibly engaged to avoid Sin. For God may, and oft does, for Reasons best known to himself, suffer Parents to go on in their Impieties unpunished for their own Time; But sooner or later, God will assuredly visit for their Sins, either upon *them* or *theirs*. And it being naturally the Desire of every Parent to wish well to their Posterity, and of all Afflictions, to lay most to Heart *their* Miscarriages, therefore to engage Parents to do well *themselves*, a more efficacious Argument for Obedience could not have been urged than this Threat, to Punish their Disobedience in their Children. For whom nothing they can do, will be able to make Amends for the Hurt their Sins are like to do them. And to be therefore a *Good Parent* does hence necessarily imply the becoming a *Good Christian*. And whom even the Bond of Gods *Law*, the Care of their own *Souls*, the fear of *Hell*, and the inward Checks of their own *Consciences* cannot, at least the Good of their *Dear Children* should restrain from such Actions, as will provoke the *jealous God* to send down a Plague upon them and theirs. Let all such therefore take heed of neglecting their Childrens Souls, lest they suffer by their Sins for such Neglect. Let them take heed of setting an Evil Exam-

ple in any thing, lest by seducing their Children thereby, they betray them to the Punishment laid up for them. Let them beware of Indulging them in Sin, lest their Childrens Iniquity be visited upon them. Let them not sin themselves for their Childrens sake. Let all Parents rather daily Pray that no Sin of theirs, with Reference to themselves, or Children, may be unrepented of that so it may not be left with whatever else they lay up for their Posterity.

Its Admonition to Children.

2. *This is a Profitable Admonition for all Children.* Children of Good Parents are hence obliged to Thankfulness to God that neither their Sin, nor Punishment is Hereditary; who have the making or marring of their own Fortune themselves; and are put in a Way to be Happy, by maintaining and improving their Parents Blessing; for whom they have not been the worse (as many others have) but much the better if they will themselves. And the Children of Wicked Parents are no less hence obliged to beware of persisting in their Fathers Sin; lest after so long continued Provocation, the measure becomed filled up in their Days, and the Punishment light upon their own Heads. For Hereditary Sin is especially to be shunned: It is soon learned; hardly escaped; Judgment will come for it; and both increaseth and approacheth daily by it. Such ought therefore to acknowledge the Mercy of God's Forbearance; who in any Measure forbears with them, after so many of their Parents Provocations before them; And should by a speedy and Sincere Repentance, endeavour to repair their Fathers Honour, and prevent the Danger they are exposed to; Lamenting and Deprecating both their own and their Fathers Sins. And all Children ought, finally, to beware of abusing this Doctrine; by rashly ascribing every Cross that be-

falls

tells them to their Fathers Sins ; which was *Israels* Crime ; saying, *The Fathers have eaten Sower Grapes, Ezek. 18. 2* and the Childrens Teeth are set an Edge ; Whereas few Children but have eaten *Sower Grapes* enough themselves to set their own Teeth on Edge, and the best usually have Sins enough to justify the infliction of the worst Temporal Calamity. And therefore notwithstanding God's visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, it becomes Children to search out and be humbled for their own Sins under all their Sufferings and Afflictions ; being assured that only these can hurt them. A Personal Repentance always either preventing or changing the Nature of Afflictions, or else Sanctifying them.

Such is the Sanction of this Commandment by way of Commination denouncing this Threat, thus considered as to the Person denouncing it, the Matter it contains, the Delinquents threatned, the Extent of its Punishment, and the Expediency thereof both in respect to Parents and Children : Wherein God hath sufficiently manifested his Displeasure, and vindicated his Justice against the Disobedient, and established his Law upon the best Security.

And because Promises no less than Threats, have their Efficacy upon our Inclinations, therefore is this Sanction also here express'd,

2. By way of Encouragement ; Making a gracious Promise of Mercy to the Obedient, *The Encouragement is* Shewing Mercy unto Thousands in them that Love me, and keep my Commandments : Wherein also are observable, 1. The Encouragement it self, which is Mercy. 2. The Extent of It, even unto Thousands. And, 3. The special Qualification of the Subject : It being of such as Love God and keep his Commandments. A Brief explanation of these will give the full Sense and Improvement of this Part of the Sanction also.

1. The

Mercy. 1. *The Encouragement*, then, or Thing here promised is *Mercy*. Which in General includes all Benefits in it; from whence they all flow; and without which nothing can be challenged from God. More, Particularly, it imports Compassion and tender Affection, with respect to Misery, extending it self to all the Necessities of the Creature; whereof *Man* that is *conceived in Sin*, and *born into Trouble*, is the Principal Subject. Nothing Needing, or being capable of more *Mercy*, than *Man*; and no *Man* but what is Miserable enough to have it exercised towards him; and which God *sheweth*, in *Pardon* of Sin; in *Grace* and *Strength* to serve him; in *Preservation* from *Afflictions*, support under them, a *Sanctified Use* of them, and *seasonable Deliverance* from them; And finally in a *Sanctified Enjoyment* of all outward *Accessions* that are Good for him, with *Hope in Death*, and *Glory* at last. This is the *Mercy* *Man* needs, and God *shews*.

Unto Thou-
sands.

2. *The Extent* of it, is *unto Thousands*; even *Thousands* of *Generations* in *Opposition* to the *Threat* that before is extended only *unto the Third and Fourth Generation*. Otherwise, if only to a *Thousand* Persons, in *One* or *Many* *Generations*, the *Number* might be supposed to be soon filled up, and so the *Encouragement* from it not *Adequate* nor answering its *Intent*, which is to manifest the difference between God's proceedings in *Way* of *Severity*, and in *way* of *Favour*, the Expressions of his *Mercy* exceeding those of his *Justice*, by a vast *Disproportion*. A *Thousand* importing, tho a great *Number*, yet is here multiplied indefinitely, being set down *Thousands* without *Limitation*; as if *Divine Kindness* were boundless, and his *Mercies* without end to such as *love him* and *keep his* Com-

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Commandments. God stints his *Punishments* and soon forgetteth the Wrongs done him; But his *Rewards* are boundless, and he long retaineth in Memory the Love shewn, and Services performed to him. Such an unconceivable Benefit, and so much the Interest of Families is true Piety; By which a Man may pleasure all that ever shall come after him, and the Children unborn may have Reason to Bless God much more for the *Virtue* than the *Wealth* of his Ancestors. For 'tis this is

3. *The Special Qualification of the Subject of the Encouragement.* It being only such as *Love God* ^{Of them} *that Love* and keep his *Commandments*, to whom the Promise ^{God, &c.} is made, in Opposition to them that *hate* him, against whom the Threat is denounced. For as Disobedience is *Hatred*, so to keep *God's Commandments*, is to *Love* him; Love being a certain Cause of Obedience, and Obedience an Infallible Sign of Love. And therefore says our Lord, *He that* ^{Jo. 14. 23.} *hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that* ^{23. & 24.} *loveth me.* And tho God is Good, and doth Good to all, yet doth he shew his *Mercy* in this extraordinary Manner only to such as *Love* him, with a true, hearty, conjugal, and unreserved Affection; *walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless*; being neither *secretly Wicked*, nor *Partially Good*; Keeping not only *this*, but *all* the Commandments with an Evangelical Perfection; who fall into no Gross Sin; Love not any Sin; Desire against every Sin; and Repent and Humble themselves whenever they are surprised or overpowered thereby. To such God hath an extraordinary Respect and *Mercy*, extending to their Posterity, hardly ever to be quite worn out; whose *Children* if they be Good, have *Mercy* assured to them much more for their Fathers sake; And

Luk. 1. 6.

Pf. 102. ult.

— 37. 35.

- 89. 32, 33.

And who are in greater Possibility to be Good ; as they have the Advantage of their Parents good Example, and Advice, and Endeavours and Prayers, and the Blessing and Promise of God to make them so ; *the Children of whose Servants shall be Etablised before him.* And even for the Children that Apostatize, or follow not the Faith of their Fathers, God hath Mercy in store to help them in time of need for their Fathers Sake, that may either Mitigate, or sanctify their Afflictions, or deliver them therefrom (*Israel being spared off and long for Abraham and David's sake*) the Seed of the Righteous not being forsaken, tho at any time reduced to *beg his Bread* ; such Correction being in Kindness to bring him to himself ; whom therefore God seldom suffers to Sin unpunished even at present ; *visiting their Transgressions with a Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes.* Nevertheless his loving Kindness will God not utterly take from him ; nor suffer his Faithfulness to fail (as the Psalmist represents it) And this Promise the Servants of God may, and ought to plead for their Children ; who are included in Covenant with them ; and without which the Mercy could not be so compleat to themselves, were it to be only for Life ; And whereby they may depend on some Good, either what they desire or better, for their Posterity, in respect of some, if not all of their Children ; of whom it is a Mercy to have any prove well, or any Good secured to them.

This affords one Encouragement for Good Mens *Patience and Content*, under whatever Uneasy Circumstances at present ; since however unfortunate they may appear in the World themselves, yet their Posterity shall be sure to reap the Rewards of their Virtue. And their Children,

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dren, should they prove *bad*, they may hope will be more gently used, and it may be, Reformed at last, or receive at least many Temporal Blessings for their Sakes. But if they prove *Good*, they may confide that it shall be well with them, and the *Little they have* for them prove better, and a more lasting and increasing Inheritance, *than the Riches of many Wicked*. And therefore to intitle Posterity to such *Mercy*; as it both engageth also Parents to *Love God, and keep his Commandments* themselves, and to Educate their Children to do so too; so it encourageth such Children so Educated to hope for more, the less Encouragement their Fathers meet with for their Piety before them, (for an Exemplary Virtue shall have its Reward at one time or other, even in this World; and if the Father had it not, the Son, and the Sons Son, thro all the Line of a Virtuous Succession shall) Who ought to value themselves more, as upon a much greater Advantage, to inherit the Rewards of their Parents Virtues, than the Fruits of their Labours.

As, then, for our own, so for our Posterities sake, God hath obliged to the Observation of his Commandments, and hath confirmed his Laws by the most Affecting Sanction: Denouncing a *Threat*, and Promising an *Encouragement* to the Ruine or Raising of our Name and Family. Which certainly was the most likely Argument (all being naturally interested in it) to work upon the Ingenuity and Affections of Men, to secure their Happiness by their Obedience.

Which blessed Effect, God Almighty Grant it may have on all, thro his Grace, for the sake of his Dear Son Jesus our Saviour! To whom be Glory ascribed by us, and all the World, Now and for Ever! Amen.

SER-

SERMON XXIV.

ON THE

Third Commandment.

Exod. xx. 7.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in Vain.

After the Object and Matter of Religious Worship, considered by us in discoursing on the Two First Commandments, we are now arrived, in this *Third* Precept, to consider the *Manner* of it, as requiring the most exalted Reverence and Holy Veneration, excluding all Prophaneness from the Worship due to God. And therefore we are commanded to Worship not only the one true God only, according to his own Divine Appointment; But to do it in the most Holy and Devout Manner, so that *his Name* may not be taken by us in vain, which is here prohibited upon the Commination of a severe Punishment.

So that this Commandment consists also of Two Parts.

I. A

I. A Prohibition; *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in Vain.* And,

II. A Commination or Threat against such Sin; *For the Lord will not hold him Guiltless that taketh his Name in Vain.*

1. *The Prohibition*, or Sin forbid here, is, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in Vain.* *The Prohibition.*

Wherein Three Things offer themselves to our Inquiry. 1. What is meant by the *Name of God.*

2. What it is to *take the Name of God.* And,

3. What it is to *take God's Name in Vain.*

1. By the *Name of God*, according to the intent of using Names among us, which is in order to know and distinguish one another, must be understood, whatever it is by which God is known to us, and in the Use whereof we mean his very Person; Including his *Titles* or Proper Names, his *Attributes*, his *Word*, all his *Ordinances* and *Institutions*, his notable and remarkable *Works*, or whatever hath near Relation unto him, whereby he is brought to our Mind, and by any Misuse whereof Indignity may seem to be reflected on his Person. *What the Name of God is,*

2. To *Take his Name*, is by Application of our selves to be concerned therewith, so as to make Use of it, either as the Object of our *Thoughts*, or the Subject of our *Discourse* and *Actions*. For then is the *Name of God taken* by us, when our Minds lay hold upon him, and we intend him in our *Thoughts*, and have Regard on him in our Minds (which is the silent Language of the Soul, whereby God is called upon, or Named, and to which he is Conscious, tho only with our selves, and to which he answers) or when we speak out *What to take it.*
his

his Name, and make him the Subject of our Lips; or Declare we mean him by our Actions; and thereby do represent to others the Regard we entertain of him. And,

When in
Vain.

3. To do this *in Vain*, is (according to the literal Import of the Original Word) to do it *Deceitfully* and *Falsly*. Which is unbecoming the *God of Truth*, who hath required from us Truth and Sincerity in the Inward Part; to whom all our Addresses are to be made with Reverence and Fear; to whose Majesty we are bound to shew the greatest Regard and Fidelity; and whom we ought ever to treat candidly and fitly, some way becoming the Dignity of his Great Name. And therefore this Prohibits the Use or Taking of God's Name 1. Without Sincerity in our Intention. 2. Without Reverence in our Performance. And, 3. Without Truth in the Action. For it being the End, and Manner, and Matter of an Action that constitutes its fitness and Rectitude, it must follow that where *those* are peccant *this* must necessarily be so too, and consequently, unfit for the Name of God to be applyed to, or used in. And therefore God's Name is manifestly taken in vain by us,

Being used
without
Sincerity.

1. If there be not Sincerity in our Intention; so as to propound to our selves a due End, which is God's Glory or the Edification of our selves or Others, whenever we use it. The want whereof renders such Use frivolous and to no purpose. For all Occasions are not alike conveniently suited to the Divine Perfections; Which being Supreme, are vilely debased, and falsely treated by low and mean Designs. Therefore God is neither to be Thought on, nor Named by us, but when we either Habitually or Actually intend his Glory

Glory or our Own or Others Edification. This then condemns, 1. The too common Use of God's Name in impertinent Discourse. 2. In Mirth and jesting. 3. In Charms and Spells. And, 4. In a Vicious Course of Life or Conversation.

1. *The too common Use of the Holy Name of God* *In common*
in common Discourse is condemned, where it is de- *Tattle.*
 signed, and serves only to vaunt and magnify Speech; or to express some small Wonderment, or the Force of Custom, and the unreasonable Wantonness of Inconsideration; And to make a *By-Word* of that *Name* that is of the greatest Import and Concernment, and which Usage, offered to any of our own Names, we know would be resented as a Dishonour not to be unrevenged; this surely is a *Vain* Use thereof, that *God will not hold him Guiltless* for who presumes upon it. So,

2. *In Mirth and Jestings*; where only the Wantonness of Wit is design'd to be exercised, and the Phancy of others surprized and amused, the *Name* of God is too Grave to be trifled with; the Object of Sport being properly something Mean and Petty, and every Thing at least by playing with it, being made so. And it is an infallible Sign of a *Vain* and Light Spirit, to talk slightly of Persons of Dignity or of Matters of great Importance, which deserve our most serious earnest. *In Jestings.*

3. *In Charms and Spells*, also the Use of God's Holy *Name*, is no less *in Vain*, to a false and unworthy Purpose; so commonly taken by the Inconsiderate Vulgar to avert Evils, and foretel Events; hereby prostituting the *Name* of God to the Devil's Service; to whom Application is made thereby against the Will and without the Help of Divine Providence; and the most Holy
 K k Things

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things (appropriated to the most Holy Purposes) are abused and debased to the vilest Drudgery of wanton Curiosity; the Indignity whereof God will be sure to Punish home at last.

*In a Wick-
ed Life.*

4. And no less (in a Sense also) finally, *In a Vicious Course of Life or Conversation*, is God's Name *took in Vain*; Reproach being brought upon it, thro the disregard of Men Professing the same. An Holy Profession requires an Holy Life, without which all Professions whatever (which is a *taking* or calling upon God's Name) is *Vain*, not answering its proper End, which is to make Men Holy, and to raise their Souls to a Divine Similitude to the Glory of God, and not to cover and palliate their greater Impieties. *In Nomine Domini incipit Omne Malum*, is a common Saying, grounded on common Experience, that all Men are but too apt to make Religion a Cloak for their *Knavery*, and in the Name of God do frequently carry on the Works of the Devil: Than which a greater Abuse is not to be put upon Religion, nor God's Name to be treated more *vainly*; Neither hath any Thing been more an Occasion of its Reproach. Men that are resolutely engaged in Vice ought to dedicate their Undertakings only to the great Patron thereof, by whose Instigation and Assistance they are seduced thereto, and whose Interest and Pleasure they alone serve thereby. For God is no way either served or pleased with Sin; and therefore not to Intend his Name *vainly*, doth oblige us to sincerity in our Professions of it; not only to secure it from Reproach, but to recommend it to a more general Esteem, by Adorning and Crediting Religion with an Holy and Exemplary Life.

Such

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Such are the Instances of *Vanity*, Inconsistent with *Sincerity of Intention*, in our Use of God's *Name*, being falsely and deceitfully apply'd to our *Ordinary Discourse, Mirth, Charms, or Impieties*. Which also is no less taken in *Vain*,

2. *If there be not Reverence in the Performance*; *The Vain* so as to express our Sense of what is intended *Use of God's* to be imported thereby: All Inconsiderate and *Name* Rash Intercourse with God, being an Abuse of *without* his great *Name*, which is too Sacred and August *Reverence.* to be medled with upon any Account, but with due Consideration. Therefore by whatever God

is made known to us, we ought to entertain it with all Respect and Honour, seriously pondering his Infinite Greatness and Glory, and bowing our Hearts in the deepest Prostration before that *Name*, to which all the Powers of Heaven and Earth bow down with most humble Veneration. This also then condemns all Use of God's *Name*,

1. In Discontent and Unkind Murmurings against him. 2. In Contempt of any Thing related to him. And, 3. In a Careless or Indevout Performance of Holy Duties to him.

1. *Discontent and unkind Murmurings against him*, *In Discon-* is a False Usage of his *Name*; neither what can *tent at his* become us, nor what he can deserve from us; *Dispensa-* Reflecting upon the Infinite Wisdom and Good- *tions.* ness of God, and forgetting or denying his Authority to Rule and Dispose of us and our Concerns, according to the Council of his own unerring Will, not according to the Wanton Lusts of our Hearts.

2. *Contempt cast upon any thing Related to God* *In Con-* (whether they be *Things, Persons, or Places, up-* *tempt of* *on which his Name may be called*) reflects the *Holy* Dishonour done them upon him, whose Character *things.*

is stamp'd upon them, and who is intended to be represented to us by them, and is therefore a vile Use of God's *Name*, in great Falshood thereto, and *Vain* Prophanation thereof. Hereby is Condemned all Prophanation of Churches, of Holy Utensils, of Holy Customs, Holy Sacraments, or of those that Minister about Holy Things.

In Indevotion in Holy Duties.

3. And, finally, a *Careless or Indevout Performance of Holy Duties to God*, being rather a Mockery, than Worship of him, is a *Vain* Treatment of his *Name*, that will do neither him nor us any Service, because reflecting on his Honour, and frustrating our Labour. For 'tis our Heart and Affection that God requires in all our Addresses to him; without which the Mention of his Name in any Act of Worship with our Lips, is but a making Mouths at him, to no other purpose but to increase our Guilt and Condemnation. And therefore all Hypocritical Services, all Senseless Battologies, Heartless Ingeminations, Distracted, Cold and Heavy Adorations, are hereby condemned as what doth not Sanctify but abuse the *Name* of God as a *Vain* Thing.

Such Inconsiderate and Rash Treatment of God is therefore in all these Instances a *Taking his Name in Vain*: To whom our greatest Reverence and Devotion is due, and whose Honour and Glory as they must be the End, so our Devotion and Reverence must be the Manner of all Converse with, and Notice and Mention of God: Thus consisting in kind and contented Resentments of all his Dealings towards us, in due Respect and Honour of whatever is Dedicated to him, and in the most humble Reverence, and Devout Fervencies of our Addresses to him. All discontented Murmurs against him, Sacrilegious Prophanations of

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of things dedicated to him, and flighty Performances of Holy Duties, which are contrary to these, being the *taking God's Name in vain*. And so also it is taken

3. Lastly, *If there be not Truth and Rectitude in our Action*; so as to use it (as *Sincerely and Reverently*, so) *Truly and Honestly*, without any manner of Falshood or Deceit, in the Thing we apply it to; Which Defect is the most Notorious Abuse of God's Name, and what is Principally intended to be prohibited in this Commandment.

Indeed the bare utterance of the Lye by us is *Vain*; but our engaging the Name of God to it is a fastning our Vanity on him. Therefore the Sin Primarily here forbid, in this Sense, is *Perjury*, or *taking the Name of the Lord our God in Falshood*, and which our Saviour in his Interpreting the Purport of this Commandment, shews to be the Sense of it. *Ye have heard, says he, that it hath been said by them of Old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self*; which plainly referring to this *Third* of the *Ten Commandments*, he makes the Primary Intention thereof to be against *Perjury*, yet enlarged also to extend to all other *Vain Oaths* and *Execrations*; And therefore herein he condemns (as to us *Christians* however, who are obliged to stand to our Lord's Interpretation) the Abuse of God's Sacred Name, by *False, Rash* and *Vain Swearing*, which being void of Truth in the Action, are unlawful Oaths, and a *taking God's Name in Vain*. Mat. 5.33.

1. *Swearing to a Falshood*, is the Interesting of God either in that which is not True, or in what we never intend to do. Whence an Oath comes to be distinguished into two sorts, viz. *Affertatory* and *Promissory*. An *Affertatory Oath* is when a Man

Affirms or Denies upon Oath a Matter of Fact, Past or Present; swearing that a thing was, or is so, or not so. A *Promissory Oath*, is a promise confirmed by an Oath, which always respects something Future. And if the Promise be made directly and immediately to God, then it is called a *Vow*, wherein God is concerned not only as a Witness, but as a Party: if to Man, then 'tis an *Oath*, wherein God is concerned only as a Witness. Now the Appealing thus to God in any of these Ways is in a Peculiar and Primary Sense, termed in Scripture, a *Taking God's Name*, or *Lifting it up*, as the Word in this Command Originally signifies, because they who Swore were wont to lift up their Hands towards Heaven. And therefore the *Psal-*
mist, after he had said, *Who hath not lift up his*
Soul to Vanity, to let us know what he means, he adds by Way of Explication, *nor Sworn deceitfully.*
And in Isaiah what the Hebrew expresses, In that
day he shall lift up, saying; is rightly Translated in our English Bibles, *In that Day he shall Swear.* So that to *Take God's Name* is to *Swear* by it. Which is so far from being Prohibited barely it self, as certain Enthusiasts would perswade, that in its own Nature it is an Immediate Act of Religion, enjoined by God, including useful Devotion, and serving to many excellent and necessary Purposes, and the Practice is recommended and confirm'd by the most unquestionable Presidents in Scripture. So that not the *Act*, but the *Vanity* of the Act only is here forbidden. *The Name of the Lord our God* we may, and when duly required, Ought to *take*; but never *in Vain*, or to a Falshood, either by way of *Assertion* or *Promise*, to *God* or *Man*. And are therefore hereby obliged to be True both in our *Oaths* and *Vows*.

Ac-

Accordingly it concerns us hence never to engage our selves by *Oath*, or *Vow*, to any thing that is *Impossible*, or *Unlawful*, or to what we never *Intended*, or do not afterwards *Endeavour* to our Power to make Good, tho to our Hurt, without seeking to elude our Obligation by Shifts, and Quirks, and Fraudulent Interpretations; Being therefore cautious to make our Words to agree to our Minds, and the Things to our Words, whenever we Swear; being sure that whatever we Interest the *Name of God* in, be both *True* and *Weighty*, secure from both *Falshood* and *Levity*: Never Asserting or Promising what we know to be otherwise, or are uncertain about; Not daring to Appeal to God at an Adventure; But using great Plainness and Simplicity, without intending to deceive, either by *Equivocation*, or *Mental-Reservation*. These are all necessary Cautions for the avoiding of Perjury, or Forswearing our selves, interpreted by our Lord to be the *Taking God's Name in vain*: Nothing more openly abusing and contemning his Majesty, than invoking him to the Attestation thus of a Lie. For this supposeth a Belief, either that God hath no regard at all to Humane Affairs, or that he is False, and a Patron of those that are so, or that he is not to be feared, however Provoked and Affronted; which certainly implies the highest Impiety in the World, and expresseth an Impudence towards God, which no other Crime is capable of doing; This not only standing God's Presence, but interesting him as much as in us lies in our Guilt. The Guilt of other Sins usually makes Men Sneak, and vigilant to evade the Thoughts of the Divine Presence. The Drunkard, and the Adulterer, and Thief, are ashamed and afraid of

having any Witness to their Crimes; and in comparison to the false Swearer retire with some kind of Modesty from his Presence; Hiding Him from their Notice, since They cannot themselves from his. 'Tis only the Perjur'd Person that must of necessity Sin without any Shamefacedness, telling a Lye to the Face of God, and calling on him to observe it, to be a Witness to his own Dishonour, with a Defiance of his Vengeance. And tho the Sinner may not intend all this, yet his Sin imports no less; Which is such an Abuse of God's *Name*, as is not to be parallel'd by any other Sin, and seems to be the First and direct meaning of this *Commandment*. Which yet further Condemns, as was said,

In Swear- 2. *All Rash Swearing*; Which is when Men make
ing Rashly. bold with God's Name in an Oath Voluntarily
Mat 5.34. and Unnecessarily. To which Sense our Saviour extends its import, when he bids us Christians not to *Swear at all*, i. e. Unless some just Reason and cogent Necessity constrain us to call in so great a Testimony, to confirm the Truth of what we spoke. For the *Name* of God is a Sacred Thing, and an Oath therefore wherein it is appealed to, is accounted an Act of Worship, and a Part of Religion, which ought never to be performed but Religiously, with Good Consideration, and humble Reverence. For when we herein call God to Witness the Truth; our Meaning must be that because there is no other Way of Witnessing it, he would either Witness our *Sincerity* by some extraordinary Accident, or our *Falseness* by some remarkable Judgment upon our selves; which to do unnecessarily, or upon Trivial Accounts, whenas even God himself makes not any such Alteration in the common Course of his

his Providence, but in Matters of great Importance and Necessity, is plainly to put upon the Supreme Governour of the Universe, to Subject the Council of his Will to our own wanton Pleasure, and offers a vain Affront to his Majesty. Where, indeed, the Matter is Weighty and Important, and the Glory of God some Way concern'd in the clearing of it (such is the doing right between Man and Man, or the procuring Credit to that Doctrine which he himself hath Commanded us to Promulge) in such and the like Cases, (especially when we have the Warrant both of his Word and his Apostles Practise) we may well presume it not unacceptable to God to call him to bear Witness thereto, so it be done upon due Consideration, with humble Reverence, out of Necessity rather than Choice. But to do this Inconsiderately, in a Frolick or Passion, upon any and every trifling Occasion, must needs argue a mean Opinion of God, and not only of Surprise into unthought of Perjury, but dispose and prepare for the most Deliberate, by wearing off all Reverence and Dread of an Oath, and rendring it more Familiar to us than Truth, so that whether we Swear true or false will be alike to us considering neither, and then not Virtue, but only Chance may be thanked if we escape Perjury as often as we Swear. To Swear therefore Unnecessarily, Inconsiderately and Rashly, tho never so Truly, is to use the Name of God in an Unlawful Oath in vain. And consequently by this Prohibition is finally condemned;

3. Lastly, *All Customary Swearing in common Discourse and Conversation.* To which also our Sa-
In Swear- ing in com- mon Dis- course.
 viour extends it, when he commands our Commu-
 nication to be, *Yea, Yea, Nay, Nay; for whatsoever*
is Mat. 5.37.

is more than these, cometh of Evil. So that to Swear at all, or by any Thing in Common Converse, is the illegal Use of God's Name comprehended in the Import of this Prohibition, as Interpreted and Extended by our Lord. For whether the Name of God be expressly mentioned in an Oath or not, yet is it necessarily intended, it being a Religious Act, whereof only that can be the proper Object. And therefore if it be not God we Swear by, it is an Idol of our own making, hereby made our God. So that to Swear by any Thing but God, is to make light of his Name, and Idolatrously to ascribe a Religious Worship unto the Creature, which is due only to the Creator. And in this Sense especially, our Lord Prohibits Swearing Absolutely, which the following mention of Heaven, and Earth, and Jerusalem, which were it seems the usual Forms of Oaths among the Jews, do plainly prove to be the meaning of Swear not at all, i. e. Not by any Creature; nor yet by the Name of God in ordinary Converse, because coming of Evil, and tending to nothing but Evil; Both the Principle and Effect of such Converse being Naught; proceeding wholly from Evil; Even an Evil Heart, which is never worse than when concerned with this Sin, which either finds or makes it all disordered and diseased with Pride, Passion, or Prophaneness; Or an Evil Custom, whereby its Deformity is familiariz'd, its Mischief disregarded, and its Practice habituated without Temptation of either Profit or Pleasure; Or the Evil One that old Blasphemer and Calumniator of God, who being fallen irrecoverably from his Favour, maliciously Envy's Man its Continuance, whom he instigates to its Forfeiture, by seducing him into his Rebellion and Despair, and alone is pleased to

hear

hear God's Name Reviled, his own devilish Design promoted, and the Language of Hell imitated. Neither tends this Sin to a less *Evil Purpose*; which in *Regard to God*, violates his Command and Affronts his Majesty; In *Respect to others*, undermines both the Publick Peace and Security of Societies, and offends and injures the Interest and Content of Particular Persons: And in *Relation to the Swearer himself*, involves him necessarily in the Guilt of Perjury, or binds him to unlawful Practices, and exposes him to a just Vengeance both in this Life and the other. Upon which accounts therefore its *Vanity* is manifest, and *Evil* to be dreaded.

As then only *Truth* is to be the Matter of an Oath; so neither is every or any Truth to be Swore to, Unnecessarily, or by any other Name but that of Gods, All *False*, and *Rash*, and *Vain Oaths* importing *God's Name* to be taken in *Vain*; which is an unlawful taking it, in the very Action, the very Occasions whereof being to be therefore shun'd by us, it hence also concerns us to beware of all *Idle and Disguised Oaths*, of *vehement Asseverations*, and of *Inordinate Anger*, which insensibly lead thereto, and Insnare therein; And to labour to possess our Hearts, and over Awe ourselves with the most serious Considerations and Apprehensions of the Greatness and Majesty of God; beware of being too bold with him; Respecting duly whatever brings him to our Minds; In all our Intercourse with him intending his Glory, Approaching him with Reverence, and interesting him in nothing but what becomes and is allowable by him: That so we may not take his Name, to any base Purpose, in any Irreverent Manner, about any unlawful Matter, in *vain*; But with *Sincerity*, *Reverence* and *Truth*, Honour

Honour and Sanctify his Great Name, who will not hold him Guiltless that taketh, in any of the fore-mentioned Ways, his Name in Vain; Which is

*The Com-
mination.*

II. *The Commination or Threatning annexed, as, the Sanction of this Commandment.* The Import whereof, notwithstanding the Difference Criticks observe between the Original and our Translation, implies these Three Motives to a due Observation of this Commandment, viz. 1. God's particular Notice of the Transgressors of his Law. 2. His Resolution to Punish them. And, 3. His Intention to do it with Rigour, and Severity; manifesting both the Weightiness of the Threat, and fitness of its becoming the Sanction of this Law. For,

*God's No-
tice of Pro-
phaners of
his Name.*

1. *This implies God's Particular Notice of the Transgressors of this Commandment; whom he will not hold Guiltless, nor Connive at, or Excuse, nor always Forbear with, as if they were Innocent, or but slight Offenders.* God's Honour is both Sacred and Tender, whereof he is a *Jealous God*, aware and sensible of every Affront, which stains with Guilt, imputed for every such Offence, and exposes to Divine Notice, no longer as Friends or Guiltless, but as grievous Offenders and insufferable Enemies, and fit Objects thenceforth of his Wrath and Displeasure. And what God then is so punctually severe in Marking, it becomes us not to slight or be careless of the committing. Wherefore God seems here purposely to express his exact Notice of this Sin, to rouse Men from that fatal Stupidity its Guilt contracts. No Sin being, generally, committed with less regret or regard; since the greatest Prophaners of God's Name, least mind or care when they Do it, or what they intend by it. Nor any Sin more ex-

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pressly warn'd against from the Particular Notice of God, no more to be Outbraved than Avoided. For *His Resolution to Punish them.*

2. *This further implies his Resolution to Punish;* such his Notice being only in order hereto; the natural Consequent of *Guilt* being *Punishment*. So that by the very Manner of expressing this Threat, God seems to intend to put the Transgressor in Mind at the same time, of the Punishment he is to expect from him. And however then such Persons may sooth themselves in their evading the Execution of Humane Laws upon them for their Prophanations; Yet are they hereby admonished of the Inevitable Vengeance hanging over their Heads from Heaven. Whereof God here also bespeaks himself to be the Executioner upon them; It being he that takes Notice of their *Guilt*, who is of Infinite *Purity* that cannot but Abominate it, of *Justice* to avenge it, of *Power* to execute what Punishment he pleases for it, and of *Knowledge* to find out the Transgressor to Suffer it; upon all which Accounts, *it is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God!* A Fatal Doom to be held *Guilty* in the esteem of him, from whom alone we must hope for Mercy! For if God condemn, there is none can Acquitt us; And if he *hold us Guilty*, we may be sure to expect deserved Punishment. So that this Threat is a Conviction of the Crime as soon as Committed; and of all Sinners, Blasphemers have least Encouragement to presume upon Mercy; every Prophanation of the Holy Name of God, *ipso facto*, consigning to immediate Punishment from him; And that not in an ordinary Manner; For

3. Lastly, *This also implies God's Intention to do it with Rigour and Severity. Not holding Guiltless* (signifying much more than what the Words seem

The Severity of Punishment due to this Sin.
to Men.

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to intend) by a *Figure*, import a Peculiar Guilt stamp upon this Sin, proportionable to its heinousness, and sufficient to deter the boldest of Sinners, such as have the Impudence to take God's Name in vain; whom God will deal with as no Ordinary Sinners; but as the greatest Criminals in the World, deserving to be punished in a Peculiar Manner, and with the utmost Degrees of Severity, both in this and the next Life.

In this Life.

In this Life, the Honour of God seems constrained to vindicate it self from such Abuse, which otherwise would bring it into Contempt with Men, and induce them to leave off the Worship of that God whom no Provocation could affect. And therefore tho God thinks fit to connive at many Sins at present, and refer them to the Punishments of the Future State; Yet doth he in all Ages express his Resentments against this Sin, and erect standing Monuments to warn and admonish every Generation, that he will make good this his Threat against it. Whence in all Histories, both Sacred and Prophane, have we multiplied Instances of strange and terrible Judgments from Heaven, lighting upon the Heads of Prophane Persons. The very worst of Miseries and Disasters have been recorded as the Effects of Perjury and Cursing and Unhallowing the Name of God, that have consumed not only the Person but the very Family of such Sinners; yea for whom the very Land and Age wherein such have lived have fared the worse for suffering such Sins to go Uncorrected.

This Occasioned that true Observation of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, that because of Swearing the Land mourneth. And *Zechariah*, speaking of the Curse that goeth over the Face of the Earth, says that God will bring it forth, and it shall enter into the House of him

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him that sweareth falsely by the Name of God, and shall remain in the midst of his House, and shall consume it, with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof. It shall remain in the midst of his House and shall consume it: Implying not a Personal and Single, but Epidemic and Complicated Curse, extending to the blasting and extirpation of whole Families. The Flying Role also being interpreted to intimate the Indiscernableness, Swiftnes, Fierceness and Unavoidableness of this Judgment. So notoriously pernicious is it to be over-Sawcy with Sacred Things even in this World. Which tho some Particular Offenders may escape, yet are all such liable hereto; and never do all escape; and not one can warrant Security to himself. And therefore it is but what all have Reason to expect, and be hence warn'd to wipe off and avoid such Guilt, which will never fail to find the Sinner out, Probably in this Life; However, most certainly,

In the Life to come; where the hottest Place and most Intolerable Tortures will doubtless be reserved in Hell for such as *take God's Name in Vain*; As having been the most Audacious Rebels, and but what themselves have so oft called for, and challenged God to execute upon them. And in this Sense it will not have been *in Vain*, that such have so often called upon God to Judge and Damn them. For as God doth at present impute Guilt for such Prophanations, so will he Execute Judgment for them in the very worst of Damnation due thereupon hereafter. And whom he will not hold Guiltless, he will reserve no Mercy for; which is not to be expected especially by them that have rejected it from themselves, and called so very oft and importunately for Damnation instead of it.

Tremble

Tremble then ye Sinners, who are thus already Damn'd out of your own Mouths; who have chose your own Doom; Anticipated the Divine Sentence; And address'd and engaged God to see it executed finally and effectually upon you! *Be not deceived, God is not mocked;* For whether you intend thus much or no (as surely no Man can be believed in earnest so to do) yet it is apparently what you would be believed to do; And cannot express your selves otherwise were you really never so much in Earnest: And justly may God therefore take you at your Word, and confirm your Request, and seal up your *Imprecations* by a Resolved *Amen*. And then think; O think in time, seriously and effectually, what your Prophane Cursing and Swearing will bring you to.

Consider this ye that forget God, and set now his Name at naught, trampling upon, and insulting over it by shameless Oaths, Blasphemies, and Irreverent treatment. Think not always to escape as now; or ever to come off as more Ordinary and Modest Sinners; whose *Guilt*, tho' great enough, yet hath not been already Sentenc'd and Pronounc'd such, as yours is, even before the great Day of Tryal, and as soon as contracted. So that of all Sinners, the Prophaners of God's Name have least Hopes left them for Mercy; who have already renounced Salvation, and are almost continually calling out for their Damnation; which as nothing but the undeserved and miraculous Grace of God's *Forbearance* towards them hitherto hath deferr'd, so nothing but a more than Ordinary, Sincere and Vigorous *Repentance* in them can revoke and cancel. And this is all such have to lay speedy and sure hold on, and thereby

thereby humbly and heartily offer to make their Peace with God whom they have so grievously abused; Confessing and Detesting their Guilt; and Endeavouring, by Watchfulness, Consideration, Meekness, serious Gravity, and the Fear of the Lord, to reform and amend their Conversation, Invoking and Supplicating to the most weighty Purpose that sacred *Name* they have treated with such Indignity by *taking it in Vain*. And this it is both Charity and Religion in every one to do what in him lies to urge such to, whether by Brotherly Admonition, or necessary Prosecution of the Good Laws we have against them; since Unconcernedness and Indifferency in this Case, involves us both in their Guilt and Danger.

For *our own* sakes then, for *their* sakes, and for *God's* sake ought all to Appear Zealous to Discourage and Suppress, by all prudent Means within our Power, this Unchristian Practice.

To this End, Let *Parents* not fail to Watch and Correct it early in their Children. Let *Masters* resolutely discourage and oppose it in their Servants. Let all seriously and faithfully reprove and warn against it in one another. Let none bear with it tamely in any; nor dare to slight the Cause of God, which he will be sure to Vindicate himself upon all that refuse to own and Honour him therein. Especially, Let *Magistrates*, and such as are in Office, vigorously shew themselves Vigilant and Active to reduce such Wretches, who have grown only by Connivance. Let no Displeasure or Flaunts dishearten herein. The Cause is God's, and he will either Protect or Recompence Good Will thereto. The Danger is Common, and it concerns all to stir to save one. The Design is noble and necessary, wherein none will be Misemployed or Unrewarded.

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And would all but thus shew themselves Faithful for God's Honour, what a mark of Disgrace would it soon fix upon this Dishonourable Sin? However, what Peace and Security will it yield from the certain Satisfaction of having done our Duty?

It remains therefore that we all Oppose the *Guilt* threatned by endeavouring to Reform the Practice of the Sin forbid; which is not to be less'n'd otherwise, and without which, it will necessarily be increasing upon us. And we shall but still take God's Name in Vain, if to our earnest Invocations thereupon for Mercy, we joyn not a most Blameless and Devout Conversation; such as may bespeak and attest our *Hallowing God's Name* here on Earth, which can alone wipe off our *Guilt* and Glorify us with him in Heaven hereafter.

To which Blessed State, by a due Regard to this and all other Divine Precepts, God in his Infinite Mercy and own Good Time, bring us, thro' the Merits of his Son, our Blessed Saviour! Amen.

SER.

SERMON XXV.

ON THE

Fourth Commandment.

Exod. xx. 8, 9, 10, 11.

*Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy;
Six Days shalt thou Labour, and do all thy Work.
But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord
thy God: In it thou shalt not do any Work,
thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy
Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor
thy Cattel, nor thy Stranger that is within thy
Gates.*

*For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and
Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is; and
rested the Seventh Day; wherefore the Lord
blessed the Sabbath Day, and Hallowed it.*

HAVING already considered the Object of
Divine Worship, as prescribed in the
First; the Matter of it, as adjoyned in
the Second; And the Manner of it, as
following in the Third; we are now engaged to
proceed to the Consideration also of the most

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Solemn Time appointed for it, as assigned in this Fourth of the Ten Commandments. Wherein we may also observe Two Parts, viz. 1. The Command it self. And, 2. The Inforcement thereof.

*The Com-
mand.*

The Command is to Sanctify the Sabbath, or a Day of Rest, on the Seventh-day, in the most Holy manner, together with all depending on us, to the Lord; It enjoining us to Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it Holy; And withal informing us that the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord our God; wherein we must not do any Work, thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor thy Cattel, nor thy Stranger that is within thy Gates.

*Its Inforce-
ment.*

The Inforcement whereof is taken from the Consideration of the Particular Care and Instancy of God in Recommending its Observation to our Remembrance; Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy: Of the Equity and Reasonableness of such Injunction, in respect of that Bountiful and Liberal Portion of Time that God hath allowed us for our own present Business; Six days shalt thou Labour and do all thy Work: And, finally, of the Solemn Dedication made by God of this Day to his own Immediate Worship and Service, By his own Example, For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, and all that in them is, and Rested the Seventh Day; And by his Benediction: Wherefore the Lord Blessed the Sabbath Day, and Hallowed it.

These Particulars, that they may more distinctly be considered, shall be comprized in Three General Heads, by which this Discourse shall be Methodized, viz. Concerning,
I. The Time, whereon the Sabbath is here commanded to be kept.

II.

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II. The Sanctification it is intended to require from us. And,

III. The Obligation enjoying us hereto.

I. Concerning the Time, whereon the Sabbath is here *The Time of commanded to be kept by us; The Command expressly informs us that the Seventh Day is the Sabbath; importing both its Proportion and Continuance hereby.* *a Sabbath.*

I. That Number of *Seventh* being to be understood in reference to a *Proportion* rather than the *Order of Time*, imports no other than that only one day in *Seven* is hereby enjoyn'd, after *Six Days* of Labour, to be kept *Holy*. For so when God requires the *Tenth* of our Increase, it is not meant of the *Tenth* in *Order*, but it is the *Tenth* in *Proportion* only. Therefore it is said here, *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy*. By the *Sabbath* meaning a Day devoted to the Honour and Service of God. And least we should be at a loss how often this must be done, it is added, *Six Days shalt thou Labour and do all thy Work; But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*: So that as our *Work* is here confined to *six Days*, so is the *Sabbath* to the *Seventh* with relation to those *Six*, being therefore a Day succeeding our *Six Days* of Labour, from whatever Date they are reckoned to begin. For as they are not determin'd to any certain *Epocha*, or Beginning here; so neither is the *Sabbath* to any other except their end. Which, as it is enough to ascertain the *Proportion*; so, in that it is all that is here said, it manifesteth no more to be intended. Accordingly, where the *Seventh Day* is mentioned, the *Six Days* are mentioned therewith; to intimate it to be the *Seventh* after *Six Days* of Labour; the

mention whereof would otherwise appear unnecessary in this Precept; where they neither imply Duty nor Reason of any Duty directly. For we are not hereby intended either to be so obliged to our own Business *Six Days* together, as to be denied to attend the Service of God on any other Day but the *Seventh*, or to be induced more by the exprefs Number of *Six Days*, to set apart the *Seventh* for God, than we should have been by Seven or Eight, or any greater Number to have set a part the Eighth or Ninth, or in less Proportion from our selves. And therefore the Insertion of this Concession of *Six Days Labour* seems evidently to have been intended in this Commandment only to determine for us the *Seventh Day*, which is the *Sabbath of the Lord* we are to Remember.

Herein also it seems to accord with the Reason here annexed, which is, *For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, and rested the Seventh Day.* The Force whereof lies not in the Priority or Order of those Days, as if God in the First *Six Days* created the World, and rested the *Seventh*, precisely from the Creation; but in the Proportion, in that God took Six Days, neither more nor less, for the Production of the Universe, and rested One; and that therefore we in like manner ought to Work Six Days, and Observe One as a Day of Holy Rest unto the Lord. For if the World was created within Six Days, then the same Allowance is sufficient, with the Divine Blessing upon Man's Endeavours, to preserve it, and to make a Provision of all Things necessary for Life in it. And as the Six signify not those precise Days on which the World was made, but such a Proportion of Time as is fit for the dispatch
of

of secular Concerns; so the Seventh which follows must be taken in the same Sense; not for the Seventh precisely from the Formation of the World, tho' it was that day on which God rested, but for one in Seven, implying the Quantity and Proportion contained therein.

Of this the Conclusion deduced from these Premises in this Commandment gives us yet a further Evidence; *Wherefore the Lord Blessed the Sabbath Day and Hallowed it.* Where it is Observable that there is no mention of the *Seventh Day*. So that tho' God be said to have *rested* on that very Day, and tho' it be allowed that he might also have sanctified a Day for a *Sabbath*, on that very Day also; yet it is not said that he did so, but rather implied otherwise, that he meant only such a Proportion of time. Wherefore it is not said that he *Blessed and Sanctified the Seventh Day*, but a *Sabbath Day*; Which is a general Word that may be applyed as well to the First as the Last Day of the Week.

This seems to make a clear Discovery that the Particular Day on which God *rested*, is not intended in the Reason of this Command; Because if that had been the Design of it, no Place had been more convenient to express it in, than the Conclusion; being the Result of what went before. In other Places the *Seventh Day* is mentioned, but here only the *Sabbath*. And why the Spirit of God, who is not obnoxious to any defect of Memory, should change the Phrase is not reasonable to be imagined, except he intend by using this General Word, to give a greater Latitude, and not confine the *Sabbath* to a Particular *Seventh Day* from the Creation. Nor do we read that ever such a Day was observed thenceforth suc-

cessively from that determined Epocha: Or if it was, it could not be Universally, when *all Flesh had corrupted their Ways*; and the Account might be forgot; and at this Distance of time impossible to be ever recovered; and consequently any other Import of the Command, be now altogether Impracticable. Besides, that by Reason of the unequal Appearances of the Sun in Different Climates, even a whole Day being got or lost, as one moves East or West round the Globe, it is impossible that the very same Day can be observed in all Places, by all Persons, at the same time. All which is sufficient Intimation that no one Particular Day was determin'd in the First Institution of the Sabbath, no more than in the Revival thereof in the Promulgation of this Law.

Gen. 6.12. See Dam-
pier's New
Voyage
round the
World.
Vol. I.
Ch. 14.

God then made the World in *Six Days*, and rested on the *Seventh*, and therefore *Blessed and Sanctified* the like Proportions of Time for the Worldly Labour, and Holy Rest of Mankind. And in this Sense was the Sabbath enjoyned and observed, or at least ought to have been, by all Mankind from the Creation. And in the same Sense was it intended to be revived in this Commandment; which therefore is Prefaced with a *Memento*, to restore to Remembrance the Observation of the same kind of Sabbath, that had been before enjoyned but too much disregarded and forgot, as a Rule for all Ages as well under the Gospel as under the Law. And tho afterwards it was determin'd to a Day for the Jews, and then for us Christians, yet was it by other Intimations than what this Law express'd though grounded upon the same Authority. For, that a Sabbath is observed is, because God hath enjoyn'd it in this *Fourth Commandment*; but that it

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is observed on one Day by the Jews. and on another Day by us Christians, is because God hath determined it differently for us, by some other Intimation of his Pleasure. Both Jew and Christian own their Obligation to *remember to keep Holy the Sabbath Day every Seventh Day*, only they differ as to the Particular Day upon different Grounds assigned them, yet both in Obedience to this General Precept of the *Sabbath*.

For what Day the Jews observed their Sabbath on before their Particular *Seventh Day* was assigned them is not Possible to determine; But that they did not observe it on the same Day God afterwards determin'd for them is Demonstrable. For the Day God determin'd for them was evidently the *Seventh Day* from the raining of *Manna*. *Exod. 16* Which had it not been a new *Sabbath*, the next *Seventh Day* before it would have been a *Sabbath* also; Whereas on that Day it was that they had a Wearisome March, and came at Night into the Wilderness of *Sin*, where they murmured for their poor Entertainment, wishing they had dyed in *Egypt*; And on that *Night the Quails came and covered the Camp*, without any Prohibition to gather them. If therefore they might not seven days afterwards gather *Manna*, because it was the *Sabbath*, but might now gather *Quails*, and did travail so much beyond a Sabbath Days Journey, it plainly seems that this Day was not then their *Sabbath*; but was first determin'd for them Seven days after to their *One Day in Seven*, according to the Decalogue, and to be their Particular *Seventh Day*, according to this Command of God by *Moses*.

Here then was the first Institution, tho not of a *Sabbath*, yet of the *Jewish Sabbath Day*; and a
Seventh

Seventh Day fixt for them, which before was left at large and undetermin'd. And this is the only *Sabbath* that is called a *Sign and Covenant* between God and that People, whereby to separate and distinguish them from all others, and which only was to last during their State, and is therefore represented under the Gospel State, as a Day equal with others, even a *heggarly Element*, and a *Shadow that was vanished away*; of no more concern to others, or to any now, than their *Circumcision and Passover*; which Things are a *Shadow of Things to come*, only Typical and Circumstantial, but the *Body is of Christ*, who hath blotted out the *Hand-Writing of Ordinances*, &c.

Gal. 4. 9.

Col. 2. 17.

—v. 14.

The *Sabbath* of this *Fourth Commandment* was not abolished but established by *Christ*, who came not to destroy, but to fulfil the *Law and the Prophets*. But the *Seventh Day Sabbath* of the *Jews* manifestly appears to have been abolished, with the other Typical Rites, by him; and the *Sabbath* was no longer to be numbred the *Seventh* from the Raining of *Manna* in the Wilderness, because the Reason and Design of that Particular Designation then ceased with the *Jewish Oeconomy*, to which it was peculiar.

The *Jewish Sabbath* then being Abrogated; being by use become to be reckoned the *Seventh Day* of the Week, tho' whether so from the Creation is altogether uncertain; the Letter of this Precept made it necessary for the *First Day* of the Week, which is our *Christian Sabbath*, to come in to the Place of it, being the only Day after Six Days of Labour together left us to fix on. For if any other Days had been fixt on, whether the *Second, Third, Fourth, or Fifth*, then the Six Days for secular Employment could not have come together,

gether, as required in the Command, and exemplified by God in the Creation of the World. And if the Determination had been deferred until the Week following the Abrogation, then a whole Week would have past without any Sabbath.

However; the Occasion seemed to determine the Day for *Us*, no less than for the *Jews*. For as God by *Moses* did then upon a new Occasion, even of their Rest from their Slavery in *Egypt*, give a new Epocha or beginning to a Circulation of Sabbaths to be reckon'd from thence in Immitation of his own Resting from his Work of the Creation; Not by the *Fourth Commandment* which speaks indifferently as to any Circulation, but by this *Ordinance* determining the Circulation to the *Seventh Day*, after the raining of *Manna*; So do *Christ* and his *Apostles* seem to fix another Epocha from his Resurrection, equally within the Compass of the *Fourth Commandment*, whereof that Rest from the Egyptian Bondage is as much a Shadow, as is the escaping of the Egyptian Destruction preserved in Remembrance by the *Passover*. And therefore this Circulation of Sabbaths was equally to cease with the *Passover* at the Glorification of *Christ*, notwithstanding the Continuance of this *Fourth Commandment* in its unalterable force and full Virtue in a new Circulation from another Epocha.

From the Resurrection then of *Christ* the *Seventh Day* is numbred, and no longer from the raining of *Manna*, which as a Type then expired. Accordingly we read of this Day's being honoured not only with the Stupendious Miracle of *Christ's Resurrection*, but also with his no less strange Appearances afterwards, to *Mary Mag-*
dalene

Galilee and the other Women ; Then to the Two Disciples going to *Emmaus*, and his Religious Assembling with them there. After that to the Disciples at *Jerusalem*, and assembling with them the same day, and the whole time of those Assemblies employed in Religious exercises ; Preaching, Celebrating the Sacrament, Instructing, Blessing his Disciples, and giving the Commission for Preaching the Gospel, and Planting the Christian Church. Again we find him with the same Disciples an *Eighth Day* after, even on that day Se'n-night, and in like manner employed ; thus celebrating Two Sabbaths successively on the Day after the *Jewish Sabbath*, or on the First day of the Week. The same day being also signalized by the Miraculous Effusion of the *Holy Ghost* in a great Assembly of *Jews* and *Gentiles* on the Day of *Pentecost* ; And the Day employed again in Preaching and other Religious Exercises. The same Day was in like manner observed at *Troas* ; at *Corinth*, and in the Churches of *Galatia*, not once only, but as a Thing of Course, and so presumed of by *St. Paul*, giving particular Instructions concerning a Collection for the Saints to be made weekly on that Day. And we have no Reason to suspect but that in other Churches also the like Custom prevailed. Upon the *Sabbath* immediately preceding Christ's Resurrection it is indeed said, that *the Women which came with Christ from Galilee, rested according to Command* ; which is observed never to have been said before now, tho the Disciples had observed many of the *Jewish Sabbaths*, doubtless, all along ; here intimating how far the Disciples might go in the Celebration of the Old Day according to the Precept, namely, to the Resurrection of Christ ; who if they

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went any further would have exceeded the Command that was designed to continue in Force no longer. It appears indeed that the *Apostles* did afterwards frequent the Synagogues upon the Jewish Sabbath; but it is never more mention'd that they did so, after this, according to Command, but *Ac. 17. 2.* according to Custom, as their Manner was; who for a while complied with the *Jews* in some Things which were in reality abrogated, to seek the gaining of them by prudential Condescensions and Accommodations to their Weakness. But after this time was in some Measure over, and Ignorance of the Liberty procured by Christ from the Ceremonial part of the Law became less excusable, the Jewish Sabbath by degrees was fully declared against as an antiquated Rite; and the Christian Sabbath universally received in its stead, having so continued, without Interruption, in the Church of God for Seventeen Hundred Years, by the Name of the *Lord's Day*, in contradiction to the Sabbath that was a Name peculiar to the *Jews* Seventh Day. So that as in Obedience to this Commandment, the *Jews* were formerly obliged to celebrate the Seventh Day, from the first raining of *Manna* among them in the Wilderness, as long as their State lasted, and till their Types received their Accomplishment by Christ's Resurrection; so we also, in Obedience to the same Commandment, are now obliged to celebrate the Seventh Day from that Resurrection, which antiquated the Day preceding it, and which is to be unchangeably continued the Sabbath of the Lord our God till Christ's coming again, when we shall begin an Eternal Sabbath with him in Glory.

The Time then Commanded here to be kept Holy, tho not determin'd to any other but only the

the circulation of every *Seventh Day* after *Six Days* of Labour, yet for us Christians is fixed to the first Day, as for the *Jews* it had been to the Last Day of the Week; Both Days being alike uncertain in what Order they now stand from that *Seventh Day* whereon God rested after the Creation, yet both equally observed in conformity to the Example of God, who in *Six Days* made *Heaven and Earth*, and rested the *Seventh Day*, and therefore *Blessed the Sabbath Day and Hallowed it*.

This Account concerning the Time whereon the *Sabbath* is here commanded to be kept seems most Satisfactory, as both answering the Letter of the Command, and solving in the most Natural, if not only Manner those endless Disputes that have sometimes disturbed the Place of tender and inquisitive Consciences concerning the Morality of the *Sabbath*, and Validity of its Change from the *Jewish* to the *Christian Day*.

However, the Determination of it to one Day more than another is but a Circumstance of the Command. And if that Day were not known, as it plainly is to us, it would doubtless have been best to keep a *Sabbath* any Day rather than none at all: God having regarded more to the Substance of his Commands than to their Circumstances. And therefore so we do but keep the *Sabbath* as *Holily* as we ought to do, we may safely comply with the Practice of the Church we live in, rather than on this account give any Disturbance to its Peace, as to the Day.

Thus then our *Seventh Day*, as to its Proportion, being determin'd for us; Inquire we,

2. Concerning the Space and Continuance hereof: Which being called here a Day, can import no less than that our *Sabbath Days*, every *Seventh*, should resemble in Proportion our other *Six*; And

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And as much of it be spent in religious Performances, as we are wont to spend of any our other Days in secular Concerns. It would be a very unbecoming Partiality, to make Long Days in serving our selves, and but short ones for the Worship of God. For it is not a Part, but the Whole of the Seventh Day that God hath Sanctified, and unless we be as Diligent and Impartial in the Service of God on this Day, as we are in our own Business on other Days, it will not be the *Seventh*, but it may be scarce the Fourteenth or Twentieth Part of our Time, and consequently not such a *Sabbath* as God hath Commanded us. It is not therefore waiting upon God one or two Hours in the Day at Church only (tho' too many neglect to do thus much) nor dedicating One Part only of the Day, tho' constantly to him (as more, not of the Worst sort, content themselves with this degree of Strictness, and then give themselves the Liberty of disposing of the Remainder of the Day as they please themselves) But it is an Attendance on the Worship and Service of God the whole Day in proper Seasons, willingly losing no Opportunity, and sedulously redeeming and contriving to multiply and lengthen them from early to late, as they are wont to do on their Six Days of Labour, without defrauding God of any Part of his Time, who had reserved so little to himself. For it is but reasonable to think that there is no part of this Day left Unhallowed, tho' we must necessarily withdraw our selves from Hallowing some Part of it. As we do on our own Common Days, retire from Labour and Business, tho' there is no Part thereof excepted from it; But the whole Day is *Holy*, and as much of it to be kept so, as is usually employed in our Worldly Business.

Business on other Days. So that our *Sabbath* is a Day of the same Space and Continuance with our other Days; And tho it is a Point controverted, by some, when it ought to begin and end, whether at *Sun-Set* or at *Mid-Night*, yet this being but Circumstantial, and no way concerned in the Command, which requires the Term of a Day Indefinitely, without modifying its Kind, Common Custom, that guides us in measuring of our own Days, ought doubtless to direct us in Measuring of the *Sabbath*, which we ought to begin and end as we do our other Days; even at *Mid-Night*, and not at *Sun-Set*, being the most ancient, and the Scripture-Computation. A Punctilio, however, not concerned in this Precept of the *Sabbath*. It much more concerns us to be well Informed,

The Sanctification of it.

II. Concerning the Sanctification it is intended to express from us; which is here observed to be expressed both *Positively* and *Negatively*, whereas all the rest of the *Ten Commandments* are but simply either the one or the other, implying the especial Care God hath took to fence in on all sides the Observation of his *Sabbath*; Commanding it not only to be kept *Holy*, but in it not to do any Work that might pollute it; wherein consists its due Sanctification. And therefore,

Positively.

1. *Positively, it is commanded here to be kept Holy.* This is the End for which it is separated, and the Means whereby to distinguish from our other Days, and the Sanctification inferr'd from God's Sanctifying of it. For as a Day is capable no otherwise of *Holiness* than as it is devoted to God's Honour and Service in Religious Worship, so God appointed this a more Peculiar Day for that end, whereby he Sanctified and Hallowed it, and we keep it *Holy*, when we so use and spend it, whether in *Publick*, *Private* or in *Secret*.

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1. *In Publick*, this Day is to be kept in Holy *in Publick.* Exercises; For which the Command seems to be chiefly intended, being directed more immediately to Publick Persons, such as Rulers and Masters of Families, to take care of Sanctifying one Day in Seven, not only themselves, but in their Publick Capacities, with all under their Care; That an appointed Time being settled, all together may be in a readiness to Worship God in Unity and Communion. And accordingly we read that *Publick Worship* hath ever been accounted the Indispensible Proper Employment of a *Sabbath*. *Moses of old time hath in every City them*, we are told, *who preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day.* And upon the first day of the Week, we also read, *when the Disciples came together to break Bread,* or receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, *Paul Preached unto them.* And on this Day it was that they being met together, our Saviour first appeared to them after his Resurrection (as was before observed) for two *Lord's Days* together. Ecclesiastical History unanimously accords to tell us how punctual and zealous the Primitive succeeding Christians were to Sanctify this Day with their Publick Devotions: Who therefore did not think it enough to Read, and Pray, and Praise God at Home, but made Conscience of appearing in the Publick Assemblies; from which nothing but sickness and absolute Necessity did ever detain them, and never without great Sorrow. Yea, and when Persecution at any time forced them to keep Close, yet if it were possible would they Assemble in the Night, or early in the Morning. And no sooner was there the least Mitigation but they presently returned to their open duty, and Publickly met all together. So

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that a *Sabbath* without Publick Worship seemed Unsanctified. And however commendable it might be accounted for Men to conceal their Devotion on other Days, yet on this Day there was a Necessity to shew it, in order to distinguish the Day, the *Holiness* whereof God will have own'd by every one, in Honour to the Lord of it; the Neglect whereof was constantly reflected on, according to the Merit of the Cause, with severe Censures in the Primitive Christian Church. And I would to God, those would, for their own sakes, well weigh this, and charge their Consciences herewith; who so inconstantly, I might say seldom or hardly ever frequent God's Ordinances in Publick on this Day! Let such compute how few *Sabbaths* they remember to keep *Holy*, who spend so few, and so little of a few in Publick Attendance on Divine Service.

Nor yet is it only the Publick Exercise of Worship, whereby this Day is *Hallowed*; the Day not usually ending, as soon as our Publick Assemblies dissolve, and the whole of it being *Holy to the Lord*; And therefore also

In Private.

2. *In Private, this Day is to be kept Holy*: As well before we go to, as after we return from our Divine Assemblies to our Houses. Where, as every Master and Governour of a Family is to celebrate the Day in Holiness, with his *Domesticks*, even with, expressly by Name, *his Sons, and Daughters, and Servants, and even Sojourners*; so are all such cheerfully to joyn all they can, in their several Places, in promoting the Sacred Solemnity of the Day. The Holiness whereof is not confined to the *Church*, but is extended to *Private Families*; The Command respecting Mankind as in such Society; [*In it thou shalt do no manner of Work; Thou,*

nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor thy Stranger that is within thy Gates.] Which what can it intend, but that God should be Honour'd in a Body by such Societies singly, on this his own Day, in Private as well as in Publick Assemblies, and together? And therefore is every Householder particularly charged with the Conduct of his Domesticks for God only on this Day; whom he ought to see as carefully employed for the Divine Honour, as he sees them busied on other Days for his own Worldly Profit. Keeping all under his Care together; obliging them to Holy Conferences, Reading, Catechising, Praying and Praising God; which are the proper Exercises for Sanctifying those Spaces of this Day, vacant from Publick Worship, and allotted to Private Devotion; Whereby the Holiness of the Day may be uninterrupted, and no part of it Unsanctified. Yea, and if there be any Space (as necessarily there will be) left free from these Exercises both in Publick and Private; then further ought the Day to be kept Holy by us.

3. *In Secret.* This being the proper Place for so solemn a Time, to be both Prepared for, and improved in. And therefore before we enter upon the other more solemn Performances either in the Church or in our Families, it is but what is very requisite for us, first to enter by our selves into our Closets, and there to Implore God's Assistance to our weak Endeavours, and to dispose and raise our Affections to a suitable Pitch for the Duties of the Day, which we are naturally so backward to, and awkward in. And after we have concluded the other Services, it seems no less necessary to retire hither again, to Examine our Performances, to Bewail our Failings, to Implore God's

In Secret:

Pardon for them, to Recollect what hath been Taught us, and to Meditate on God's Works of Creation, Providence and Redemption, and on his Glory and Goodness manifested herein to us.

This is to Sanctify the *Sabbath* and to keep it Holy, i. e. Holily employed and Spent in Holy Duties in *Publick, Private, and Secret*, according to the positive Part of the Precept enjoining its Sanctity. For which, that we may have Leasure and Opportunity, the Negative Part thereof is annexed, which Prohibits its Prophanation, and restrains us from all other Employments that might otherwise divert and hinder us. And therefore also

Negative-
ly.

2. *Negatively, it is Commanded, that in it thou shalt not do any Work, Thou nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor thy Cattel, nor thy Stranger that is within thy Gates.* Hence the Day hath its Name *Sabbath*, signifying Rest; whereby as such, it is therefore Sanctified, and that we may keep it Holy, in it we must not do any Work; i. e. Not any common Servile Work, such as might or ought to have been done on the Six Days; nor yet rest in a bare Cessation from Labour, as a sufficient Sanctification of the Day. To understand therefore this Prohibition it is wont here to be distinguished concerning the Work not to be done, and the Not Doing it, or Rest, wherein the Duty consists.

The Work
to be rested
from.

The Work not to be done on the Sabbath Day, being referred in the Commandment to the Six Days of Labour, plainly is restrained to such Work as is proper for the Employment of that time, permitted to Man, and is unseasonable for this Day reserved for God, whereby the Sabbath would be turn'd into a Worky-Day, and rendred Common with

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with our other Days: not for any inherent Evil that is in any of our other Days *Work* allowed us by God, but for the necessary Inconvenience and unseasonableness of such *Work* prohibited us only at such a time. *Every Thing is Good in its Season*; and tho' Spiritual Exercise may in some Cases be not only consistent with, but very requisite and Advantageous to our Worldly Employments, from which therefore they are not altogether debarr'd; yet are worldly Employments always an hindrance to, and Inconsistent with Spiritual Exercises, and therefore are never to interfere with them. And therefore that we may be wholly employed in God's Work, we are wholly restrained on this his Day from our own Work, as distinguished and different from God's Work, driving at other Ends, and hindring this.

Not absolutely *Work* then, but only *Work* for Worldly Ends, belonging to our *Six Days of Labour*, is forbid the *Sabbath*; which it self also is a *Worky Day* for Works of *Piety*, *Necessity*, *Great Conveniency*, and *Charity*, whereby the *Sabbath* may be *Sanctified*. For,

1. *Works of Piety* are proper to the Day, and ^{Not Works} the more *Labour* is spent therein, the more accep- ^{of Piety.} tably is God served, and his *Sabbath Sanctified*. For which Reason the *Priests Prophanation of the Sabbath Days in the Temple*, by their hard Labour in Sacrificing, is pronounced *blameless*, because an in- ^{Mat. 12.5.} stituted piece of Service in the Worship of God; which otherwise would have Prophan'd the *Sabbath*, but now Sanctified it. And upon the same account were *Sabbath Days Journies* allowed the *Jews*; because tho' not Actions of *Piety* in themselves, yet they were tending to *Piety*, as thereby Men might come from distant Places to their

Holy Assemblies. And tho some have limited them to one Mile, others to Two, which is said to be the Distance of the utmost part of the Camp of Israel, from the Tabernacle of the Congregation, yet is it also reasonably supposed, that a Sabbath Days Journey was any distance from the Place of their Abode to the next Synagogue; which commonly not being above a Mile or Two, that Distance might come to be commonly so called.

Works of Necessity.

2. *Works of Necessity* are consistent with the Sanctity of the most Holy Day: being the Interpositions of Divine Providence, of Authority to suspend his own Laws; and intending the chief Design and meaning thereof, which is the Good of Man, for whom the Sabbath was Instituted, and not Man made for the Sabbath, without which kind of Works we cannot subsist, at least not well subsist on this or any other Day; from the doing whereof, Nothing therefore can restrain. And this the very Pharisees, the precisest Sticklers for the outward Rest, were constrained to Assent to, in as much as they could not deny the lawfulness of helping a Beast out of a Pit into which it was fallen on the Sabbath Day. And yet great Wariness and Integrity ought to be used herein, that the Necessity be not wilfully and willingly made, nor under the Pretence thereof, Liberty taken to do what might have been reasonably foreseen and done before, or may be foreborn and done as well after the Sabbath. And for the same Reason

Works of Convenience.

3. *Even Works of great Convenience*, are allowable on this Day, so far as may be consistent with its due Sanctification; since God prefers Mercy before Sacrifice, and designs not the Prejudice but Advantage

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tage of Men by obliging them to his Service. From any of which Works if the Jews were restrained, 'tis certain it was by some Obligation peculiar to that People, wherein the rest of Mankind is not concerned, and whereof this Commandment makes no mention; And is therefore interpreted by our Saviour as having no relation thereto; by his defending his Disciples against the Exceptions of the Pharisees for *plucking the Ears of Corn, rubbing them in their Hands, and eating them on the Sabbath Day*. And therefore on this Day we take care of our Beasts, and dress our Bodies, and provide for Food as on other Days; and as no doubt, even the Jews did prepare their *Manna*, and the Priests the *Shew-Bread*, and *Pascal Lamb*; who were not prohibited to *kindle a Fire* on this Day, to dress their Meat, but only for their worldly Occupation and Business that might and ought to be done on the *Six Days of Labour*. And yet Christian Prudence will caution us to have as little and few Avocations as may be from the Service of God on this Day. But then,

4. *Works of Charity and Mercy* are particularly approved, and seem most proper on this Day instituted for a Memorial of God's greatest Mercy towards us; Insomuch that they were allowable to descend even to whatsoever poor Beast shall stand in need thereof: and to *do well on the Sabbath Day*, is both Lawful and Commendable; whether it be to Mens Souls, by *Instructing, Advising, Exhorting, Reproving, Comforting and Praying* with and for them; Or to their Bodies, by *visiting the Sick, Reconciling Differences, or Relieving the Poor*; which St. Paul ordains and allows as a suitable Employment for this Day; and on which our Saviour wrought many of his Miracles in compassion to

Mat. 12.1

Exod. 35.3

Works of
Charity.

Mat. 12.11

Lu. 13.15.

Mat. 2.27.

1 Cor. 6.2.

Humane Infirmities. From all which it appears that it is only a Cessation from *Servile Work*, and for *Worldly Ends* that falls under the Prohibition of this *Commandment*.

*The Rest
requir'd.*

The not doing whereof, or rest from which, is not therefore, it self, the Duty of *keeping holy the Sabbath Day*, (as hath been by some supposed, because the Precept extends to *Cattel* which are in no Capacity to sanctify it otherwise) In as much as these are two distinct things; the one mentioned as the *End*, and the other as the *Means*. We being therefore to *do no Work*, in order to *keep Holy the Sabbath Day*, to which Corporeal Labour, and Worldly Employments are an Impediment. And therefore it is but a Part of the Command that extends to *Cattel*; whose Masters are to *keep Holy*, what they only can *Rest on*; no more limiting the Duty of the one by the Capacities of the other, than the King of *Nineveh's* Decree, extending to both, obliged both alike to the Duty of an Holy Fast. Besides, that such *Rest* is inconsistent with the Holy Convocation and Sacrificing that God appointed, and with Reading and Preaching out of *Moses* and the Prophets, and resorting to solemn Places for performance of these Duties, constantly practised on this Day; for which it was set apart and Emphatically *Blessed*, as God being hereby likely to be most Honoured; for which a Cessation from all manner of Work would Incapacitate, and Prophan the day by *doing nothing*, as much as it would be Prophan'd by *doing any thing* thereon.

The Sum then of this Command, as it imports our Observation of a particular Time for the Worship of God, is, that after *Six Days of Labour*, on every First Day after the *Jewish Sabbath*, even the Day on which our Saviour arose from the

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the Dead, laying aside all our Common Employments, we should sedulously apply our selves, with all under our Care and Authority, to the most solemn and serious Worship of God in *Secret*, in *Publick*, and in *Private*; Making Religion which is the great Work of every Day, the more peculiar and proper Employment of this. And therefore, upon the Approach of every *Lord's Day*, that we may thus *keep it Holy*, and *rest from all our Work*, according to the present Force of this Law, it will become us to rise as early to the Service of God on his own Day, as we are ever wont to do for Worldly Business on any of our Days: Betaking our selves severally, *In Secret*, to Implore the Divine Aid and Benediction, to raise our Affections to a suitable degree of Love and Reverence, by Reading and Meditation. Allowing as little Time as may be to other Necessary and Convenient Avocations from such Exercises, till we repair from our Closets to the Church. Whither coming early with our Family, we are to joyn in the *Publick Worship of God*, in Prayers and Praises, and hearing his Word Read and Preached, not failing to communicate in whatever Holy Ordinance he is there designed to be acknowledged thereby; and, as often and long as such Opportunities are offered, preferring our Publick before Private Devotion. Whence returning from thus serving God, we ought not to neglect the serving him any more; but, giving way to the necessary Refreshments of Nature, we are to continue his Worship in our *Houses*, with our own Domesticks, whom we are to over-see and direct in God's Work on this Day, as we did in our Work on the other Days. Calling them together, Worshipping God in our *Families* with them,

them, Instructing, Advising, and Encouraging them severally according to their Needs and Capacities in their Duties. None absenting himself needlessly from such Service, nor interrupting it by any other Employment than what Necessity or Charity may justify him in. All Worldly Business, Idleness, Sports, and needless Diversions, being totally refrain'd. Concluding the Day, not sooner than we are wont to do our other Days, as we began it in Secret with God. Hereby the the Sanctification and Rest of God's Holy Sabbath, will have been duly kept, and this Command Remembered by us. To promote which, proceed we to Inquire,

Its Obliga- III. Lastly, *sion.* Concerning the Obligation enjoining us hereto: Implied in the Commandment in these Three Particulars, viz. The Particular and Instant Care of God in recommending its Observation to our Remembrance: *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy.* The Equity and Reasonableness of the Sanction, from that bountiful and liberal Portion of time that God hath allowed us, for the Affairs and Business of this present Life; *Six Days shalt thou Labour and do all thy Work.* And the solemn Dedication of this Day by God himself, to his own immediate Worship and Service; both from his own Example, *Who rested the Seventh Day, after his Six Days Work of Creation;* and by his Benediction, who therefore *Blessed the Sabbath Day and Hallowed it.*

I. Consider we the particular and instant Care of God; in recommending the Observation of the Sabbath Day to our Remembrance. *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy.* Which is such a Preface as none other of God's Commandments are vouchsafed.

Not

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Not but that any of his other Commands exact as much our *Remembrance* to Observe them as this; since he that Offends in one Point is reckoned Guilty *Jam. 2. 10.* of all, God's Will being of equal Obligation to be obeyed in every Duty; Only this Men are the aptest to Neglect, with most fatal Consequence to themselves, for it hath long been the Observation of Good Men, and Confession of bad Men, that the Flood of Wickedness first breaks in at this Breach, The very Face of Religion among us, being owing to nothing more than to this Institution of a Particular Day to make publick Profession of it. When once Men have hardned themselves to make no Conscience of distinguishing the Sacredness of this Day; we commonly see them prone to all manner of Sin. And whenever any of them happen thereby to be brought to an untimely End, they are forced to acknowledge, what is not to be either congealed or denyed then, that the occasion of their falling into those Crimes which caused their Deaths, was their Prophanation of the Sabbath, and contemptuous Neglect to keep Holy the Lord's Day. This therefore, as a strong Fort, is, while well guarded and maintain'd, a good Security to the due observation of all the rest of God's Commandments. And while Men make Conscience of keeping *Holy the Sabbath Day*, there is probability they will grow better thereby, and however some security that they will not grow worse. But in betraying this Hold they betray all; and let in a Deluge of Vice, which seldom stops before it ends in utter Ruine. So that he, that forgets this, *Remembers* nothing of his own either Duty or Interest. And usually Mens Regard hereto discovers what they really are, notwithstanding their Specious Pretences of a Profession.

The

The best Men being ever most mindful of Sanctifying this Day, which none but the very worst do ordinarily Prophane. This being what God hath especially recommended to our Care and Watchfulness; which our Eye therefore ought ever to be upon, to prepare for it before it come, and to Redeem and Improve it when it does come, as of greatest Moment to secure and increase our Virtue and Capacity to Honour God, in the due Observation of any of his Commandments.

2. Consider, again, the Equity and Reasonableness of the Sanction, from that Liberal Portion of Time that God hath allowed us for the Affairs and Business of this present Life: Six Days shalt thou Labour, and do all thy Work; God reserving only the Seventh Part of our Time, who might have demanded the whole, whose all is, from us, to himself. Herein only securing some just Acknowledgment of his Propriety, by an easy Composition; Indulging a seasonable Rest for both our own Bodies, and our Cattel, after as many Days Labour as can well be endured; Allowing sufficient Space for dispatch of our own temporal Concerns; Not confining us to over much Holy Service at once; Neither yet intermitting spiritual Employments, long enough to suffer the Soul to contract a Deadness or Aversion thereto; nor proportioning less Space for their Performance, than their Difficulty and Importance necessarily require. And therefore had it been left to our own disposal, we could not in Justice have allotted less than the Seventh Part, Especially since we hope shortly to dedicate the whole of an Eternity thereto. And he then that thinks this too much for God, is doubtless for allowing him, by his Good will, none at all.

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The Largeness therefore, and Freeness of our own Time, is a mighty Argument for our more Just Observation of the Little Remainder dedicated to God, leaving no Man either Reason or Necessity to defraud him thereof; It being fitter to spare some of our Abundance, which is all God's, than to filch from God's Little, which belongs not to us. However, his Bounty to us, should make us just to him; and since he hath given us *Six Days* and himself but *One*, we should own his Propriety, as well as claim our own; and which appears hence the most Reasonable and Equitable Thing in the World, that we should *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy, Six Days labouring, and doing all that we have to do.* For,

3. Lastly, Consider we also the Solemn Dedication of this Day by God himself, to his own immediate Worship and Service; Both from his own Example, who rested the Seventh Day, after his Six Days Work of Creation; And by his Benediction, who therefore Blessed the Sabbath Day and Hallowed it.

The Example of God's rest on this Day, seems to be inserted in the Precept on no other Design but to inforce thence its Observation; Discovering the Antiquity of its Institution, the Honour it is stamp'd with, and the Authority warranting our Compliance; being what God began himself, for us to follow him in; and wherein probably he hath been followed ever since the World was formed; and will doubtless so continue to be till it shall end, by all his true Worshipers; whose Glory as well as Duty it is to be Imitators of him.

And the Divine Benediction attending it recommends it for its sake, and our own, to our more peculiar regard, as being a Day particularly Bless'd, and designed for a Blessing to us. For so it's Benediction

nediction may be understood both in a *Relative*, and *Effectiv* Sense. For Times no more than Places are capable of any real or inherent Blessing. But

Relatively, the Sabbath is *Bless'd and Hallowed* as it is separated from Prophane and Common unto Sacred and Spiritual uses; whereby it is differentiated and exalted above all other Days; whereof our Notice and Regard is commanded, that *what God hath Sanctified* be not esteemed *Common or Unclean*.

And *Effectively* it is *Blessed*, as the appointed Season of God's more solemn Dispensation of his greatest Blessings to us; whereby it is rendred a *Day of Blessings*, as well as a *Blessed Day*, and no less *Profitable* to us, than *Honourable* in it self. For tho' God doth Bless us on other Days, (to which the Comfort of every Day is owing) yet it may not be in that plentiful Manner, or excellent Kind, nor with that Constancy and Assurance to be depended on by us, or perhaps only as some Effect of his Blessing obtained by us on this, tho' dispens'd on some other Day. This only being the appointed Day of Blessings, above all other; whereon Divine Comforts are Dispens'd for the prosperous Subsistence both of our Souls and Bodies on the Intermediate Days; so that only they that keep *Holy the Sabbath Day*, may reasonably expect, or do usually experience a Blessing upon either of them all the Week following.

For, as for the Soul, this Day is peculiarly designed a Blessing to it; by calling it out of the Hurry of Worldly Concerns, to Spiritual and Holy Employments, that tend to refine and improve its Capacities, to recover it from Sense and Sin, and exalt it to a more near Similitude and Union to

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its Maker. For which end, Holy Ordinances are more freely dispens'd, and fill'd with the Effusions of God's Spirit and the Grace of his more Immediate Presence ; And a greater Portion of Spiritual Blessings from him (as one says) may with a more Confident Faith be expected, when both the Ordinances and the Day too are Gods, than when tho' the Ordinance be his, yet the Day is ours. So that Spiritual Employments tho' profitable on any Day yet are most Seasonable, and likely to be most Advantageous on the Lord's Day.

And then as for *Temporal and Bodily Concerns* ; When the *Soul* is Blessed, These cannot go amiss. And our Saviour hath expressly promised, that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, *all these Things shall be added unto us* ; being Blessings of an Inferior order and value that will be thrown into the Bargain, of Course accompanying those greater ones of the Soul for present Encouragement. And, therefore they only that do make Conscience of spending Religiously the Lord's Day, can justly hope to Live Comfortably all the Week ; and they who do not seek for a Blessing from God on the Day he hath Bless'd and set apart for Blessing, they may reasonably expect to Want and go without his Blessing all the Week following. For God's Blessings are wholly in his own Dispose, not always to be had, when just wanted or desired, but only when he will be pleased to bestow them ; if therefore we neglect his Time of proffering, we may not hope that he will observe our time of needing them. Many Blessings are doubtlesly lost for want of reasonable seeking ; so that by neglecting the Opportunity that is *Blessed* on the *Lord's Day*, we expose our selves to the Wrath and Vengeance of God

Mat. 6.33.

God on our own Days ; Who in Justice may forsake us then, who first forsook him when he appointed us the Time of waiting upon him.

Nor are we without many and very signal Instances of severe Judgments God hath in every Age, inflicted on *Sabbath Breakers*, as well as Constant Mercies wherewith he hath successfully Blessed the Pious Observers of that Day.

Many that have been notoriously Guilty of the Sin, have as remarkably been overtaken with their Punishment. And particularly it may be observed that those who have presumed, by reason of their poor and strait Circumstances in the World, to encroach upon the Sanctity of this day with their common Concerns and Business, are usually condemn'd to continual Poverty and unsuccessfulness in almost all their Undertakings. And on the other Hand, many that have duly herein made Conscience of their Duty, have abundantly been made sensible of the Blessing, so as to see and Acknowledge it the Effect hereof. Insomuch, that one would be ready to conclude, that in the Womb of this one Day, are wrap'd up all the Blessings and Misfortunes of our whole Lives ; And that just as we *Remember to keep Holy the Sabbath Day*, so usually doth God remember us to bless our secular Employments on our other Days.

To this, then, ought we to apply our selves as to the Fountain of all our Blessings ; As the only means to better our selves, and mend the Age and Times we live in.

You therefore, that are Masters and Governours of Families ; *Remember your Obligation and Interest in this Commandment.* The Observation of it is required from your Hands, who are made Guardians of God's Propriety in it ; being charg-
ed

ed not only with your single Duty, but with that of all your Family herein; *your Sons and your Daughters, and your Servants and Sojourners with you,* whom you cannot connive at or suffer, much less Countenance in any Prophanation of this Holy Day, without breach of your Trust, and Guilt not only of Impiety, but of Injustice, and Unfaithfulness to God.

And you *Children or Servants, or Sojourners* in such Families, where a Pious Regard is had to the Sanctification of the Lord's Day, Bless God for the Mercy, and repine not at the Restraint; but make due Improvement of the Means which others want, and none can be bless'd without. And if it be your Lot to live in Families where no regard to the Day is had, yet do you beware of partaking in the Sin; and think not your selves ever a whit the more at Liberty for being left so, since God remits not your Obligation; But rather be more careful of your selves, since neglected and exposed by others.

In a Word, let us all do what we can to retrieve and uphold the Holiness of this Day, on which the Profession of Holiness, and Enjoyment of Happiness so visibly Depend: Expressing our Thankfulness for its Blessing, by our ready Acceptance thereof, in always *Remembering to keep Holy the Sabbath Day.*

Which God Almighty, by his special Grace make us, both Willing and Able faithfully to perform, to the Glory of his Great Name, and our own Salvation, for Jesus Christ his sake! To whom be Glory now and for ever, Amen.

The End of the First Volume.

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of not only with your single Day, but with
that of all your Family herein: your Son and your
Daughter, and your Servant and your Maid, and your
Whom you cannot conceive as or think much less
Commandment in any Propagation of this Holy
Day, without breach of your Fifth and Sixth
not only of Society, but of the World and Church.

And you know of your own or of your Family
God's Family, where a Place is given to the
sanctification of the Lord's Day, that God for
the Mercy, and to give not at the Sabbath, but
make the improvement of the Sabbath which others
and some can be blessed without. And this
is your lot to live in Families where in regard
to the Day is had, yet do you bear the burden
in the Sin, and think not your lot is ever a
while the more at Liberty for being left to, since
God reminds not your Obligation: But rather be
more careful of your Lives, than neglected and
neglected by others.



In a Word, let us consider what we can for
to have and uphold the Day of this Day, on
which the Sabbath is kept, and to preserve
of Sabbath is visibly Dependent: Expecting our
Thanksgiving for its blessing by our ready Accep-
tance thereof, in every Remembrance of it.

Which God blessing, let us first of all
both in our own and in our Family, to
the Glory of our Great Name, and to our
own, for Jesus Christ his sake. To whom be
Glory and praise for ever, Amen.

The End of the First Volume.

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